

# 2017 US ADOPTION ATTITUDES SURVEY

CONDUCTED BY HARRIS POLL ON BEHALF OF THE  
DAVE THOMAS FOUNDATION FOR ADOPTION

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# BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

# BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Since the benchmark study in 2007, the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (DTFA) has continued to commission Harris Poll every 5 years (2012 and 2017) to determine Americans' current level of awareness and knowledge, as well as attitudes and behavior toward adoption and foster care, trending changes over time.


Specifically looking at:

- Why people adopt or why people do not adopt?
- What are the barriers to foster care adoption?
- What beliefs do people have about foster care adoption and how were those beliefs developed?
- What are the most common sources of information about foster care adoption?
- What are people's concerns about financial support of foster care adoptions?
- What issues or attitudes surround over-representation of African Americans in the foster care system?
- What are beliefs around who should be adoptive parents?
- What are the key issues on which the DTFA should be spending their money?
- What is the perceived impact of adoption as a social issue?
- What is the connection between foster care adoption and Wendy's (DTFA)?

# METHODOLOGY

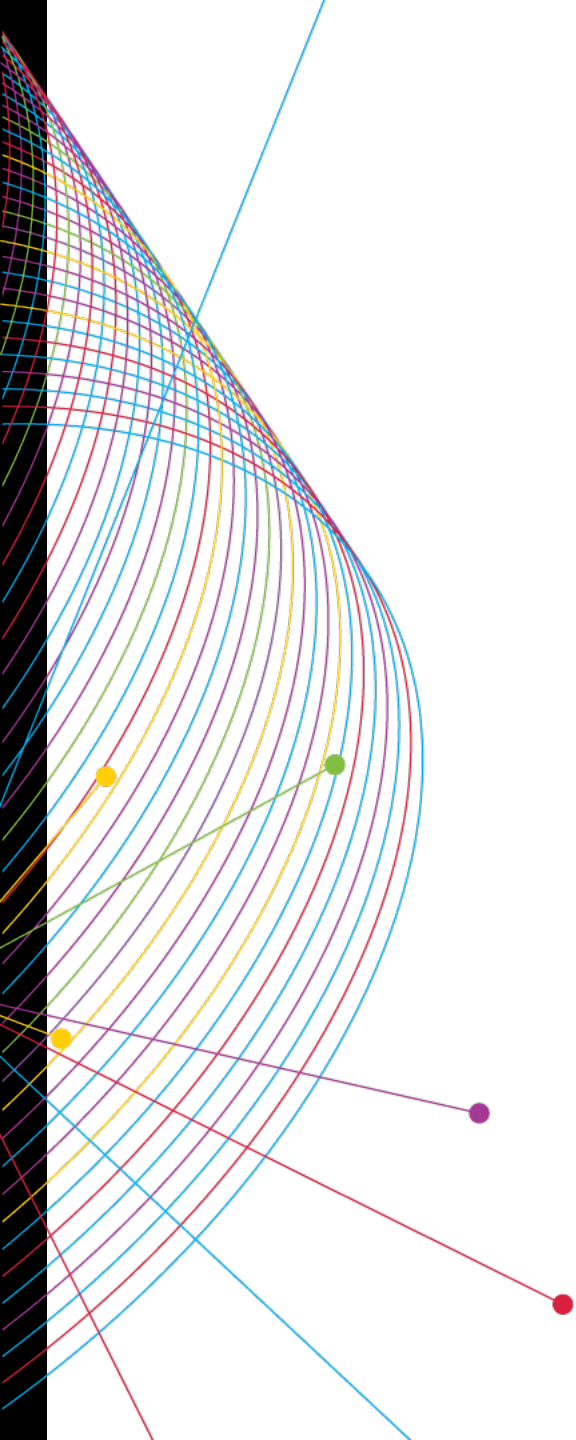
- This 2017 tracker was conducted online January 4-20, 2017. A total of 1,448 US adults participated in the survey, including an oversample of 202 Blacks/African Americans and 201 Hispanics.
  - The 2007 benchmark for this research was conducted online between April 12th and May 1st, 2007. A total of 1,660 adults participated in the survey.
  - The 2012 tracker was conducted online between July 9th and July 18th, 2012. A total of 1,428 adults participated in the survey.
- Qualified respondents met the following criteria in each wave of the survey:
  - 18+ years old
  - U.S. resident
- Data are weighted to be representative of the US adult population by gender, region, race/ethnicity, age, income and education. Data are also weighted to reflect respondents' propensity to be online.

# REPORT NOTES

- The percentage of respondents has been included for each item
- An asterisk (\*) signifies a value of less than one-half percent (<0.05%)
- A dash (-) represents a value of zero percent (0)
- Percentages may not always total 100% because of computer rounding and/or the acceptance of multiple responses
- Where appropriate, significant differences at 95% confidence between years or subgroups are indicated by a capital letter (e.g., **A**, **B**, **C**); when both trending and subgroup data is shown together (slides 54-57, 86), significant differences between subgroups within a given year are indicated by red boxes 
- Please take note of base sizes for each chart throughout the report. Caution must be taken in analysis and reporting of data among base sizes less than 100. With base sizes less than 100, data should be interpreted directionally, not statistically.

# DEFINITIONS OF TYPES OF ADOPTION DISCUSSED

- Private infant adoption is the adoption of a U.S. infant through a licensed adoption agency or adoption attorney.
- Foster care adoption is the adoption of a foster child who has been freed for adoption when the birthparents' rights were terminated.
- International adoption is the adoption of a child who is a citizen of one country by adoptive parents who are citizens of a different country.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Experience with Adoption

- **Reported levels of adoption in general, and specifically foster care adoption, appear to be on the rise.**
  - Adults today are more likely to say they have direct ties to adoption than in previous years – either from being adopted as a child or adopting a child themselves.
  - The percentage of adults saying they have adopted a child through the foster care system has increased over previous years, though this represents a low percentage of the respondents so caution must be taken in interpreting these results.
- **More than ever, adults know someone adopted through the foster care system and, perhaps due to increased awareness of adoption types, adults may feel more comfortable discussing their own adoptions than in past years.**
  - Adults are equally likely today as in 2012 to know someone who has been adopted. However, they are significantly more likely than in previous years to know someone who has been adopted through the foster care system.
  - Overall, awareness of adoption type of friends/family has increased as well (i.e., they are less likely to say they are “not sure” of the type of adoption).

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Potential Adopters

- **Likelihood to consider adoption remains stagnant, though among those ever considering, their consideration for adopting through foster care increased significantly.**
  - Among those who have not already adopted a child, consideration levels are equal to that of 2012. However, both private and foster care adoption see increased consideration levels among those who have considered adopting.
- **Adults considering adoption are significantly more likely to be younger, a minority, and single/never married. They're also more likely to know someone who has been adopted, already have kids, and have a high opinion of adoption.**
  - Adults who are 18-44, Black or Hispanic and single/never married or living with a partner are more likely than their counterparts to be considering adoption.
  - Those who know someone who has been adopted are nearly twice as likely to be considering adoption compared to those who don't. Those with kids are more than twice as likely as those without to be considering, as are those who have a high opinion of adoption compared to those with a low opinion.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Adoption Preferences

- **Those considering foster care adoption are serious about it and those not considering it largely cite personal reasons, rather than a poor view of the foster care system.**
  - A majority of adults considering foster care adoption say they're very/somewhat serious about their consideration – more so than either international or private potential adopters. Seriousness among potential foster care adopters has increased significantly over previous years.
    - Reasons for considering foster care adoption are largely altruistic, to help a child in need. Those who aren't considering it cite issues with their current situation or say they haven't thought much about it.
- **Most have no preference for the gender of their future adopted child, though younger children who share their same race are preferred.**
  - Among those who have either adopted previously or are considering adoption, a majority have no gender preference and those who do would consider the opposite gender. A majority prefer a child younger than 5 years of age. Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics are significantly more likely to prefer an adopted child of their own race, respectively.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Opinions of Adoption & Information Sources

- **Having ties to adoption – knowing someone who has been adopted or personally considering adoption – leads to increased favorability for all types of adoption, indicating further opportunity to increase familiarity and therefore increase favorability among those without ties.**
- **The ways in which Americans receive their information on adoption continues to shift. Digital sources such as Internet search engines and social media are on the rise while the more traditional media of television and radio are decreasing, providing ample opportunity to start conversations around adoption in digital areas.**
  - While adults are more likely than ever to know someone who has been adopted, they're slightly less likely today than in 2012 to say they get their information on adoption from a friend/family member, though it is still the top information source.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Foster Care Adoption – Familiarity & Opinions

- **While familiarity levels with foster care adoption have increased over prior years, levels remain low overall, indicating there are opportunities to educate Americans – likely through digital media and local agencies. Opportunely, media coverage is typically seen as favorable.**
  - Most commonly, adults receive their information on foster care adoption through family/friends, local social service agencies, local foster care agencies, and Internet search engines. Social media as an information source has increased while TV has decreased since 2012.
- **While familiarity is low, overall opinions of foster care adoption are high and rising over the years. Opinions of foster care parents are also largely positive.**
  - Highly favorable opinions of foster care adoption have increased since 2012, on par with that of the view of media coverage, and is significantly higher among those who have considered adoption.
  - Positive opinions of the foster care system have also increased significantly, both among those considering and not considering foster care adoption.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Barriers to Foster Care Adoption

- **Americans generally feel children are placed in foster care after suffering pain and tragedy – including abuse and neglect. Further, while a majority of all adults do feel every child is adoptable, there is room to improve this sentiment particularly among men and those 65 and older.**
- **Looking at adoption in general, a majority feel behavioral issues and mental disability have a negative impact on adoptability.**
  - Age and race/ethnicity impacts perceptions of adopted children. For those who are younger and white, adoptability is seen as positive, whereas, for those who are not young or are of minority race, adoptability is seen as less positive.
- **With foster care in particular, children are seen as more likely to have issues related to trust and bonding, behavior and self control, and problems with school and learning. With this perception, there is opportunity to dispel any myths around the problems of foster care children. Still, this perception is likely not a deterrent to foster care consideration, as those who have considered foster care adoption are just as likely to feel this way as those who have not (directionally, due to small base size).**
  - These concerns are lessened for children adopted through private infant adoption.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Barriers to Foster Care Adoption - Continued

- **Perceived expense and difficulty are also not likely barriers to foster care adoption, as those who have considered are equally likely to have similar perceptions as those who have not considered.**
  - Relative to other adoption types, fewer Americans cite foster care adoption as expensive or difficult.
- **Despite some perceived ease and inexpensiveness, a majority cite financial reasons as at least minor concerns of foster care adoption.**
- **Further, a majority of those considering foster care adoption indicate that receiving financial support and support for the emotional well-being of the adopted child would make a least a minor difference in their decision to pursue.**
- **These sentiments highlight opportunities to increase awareness of resources available to adoptive parents.**

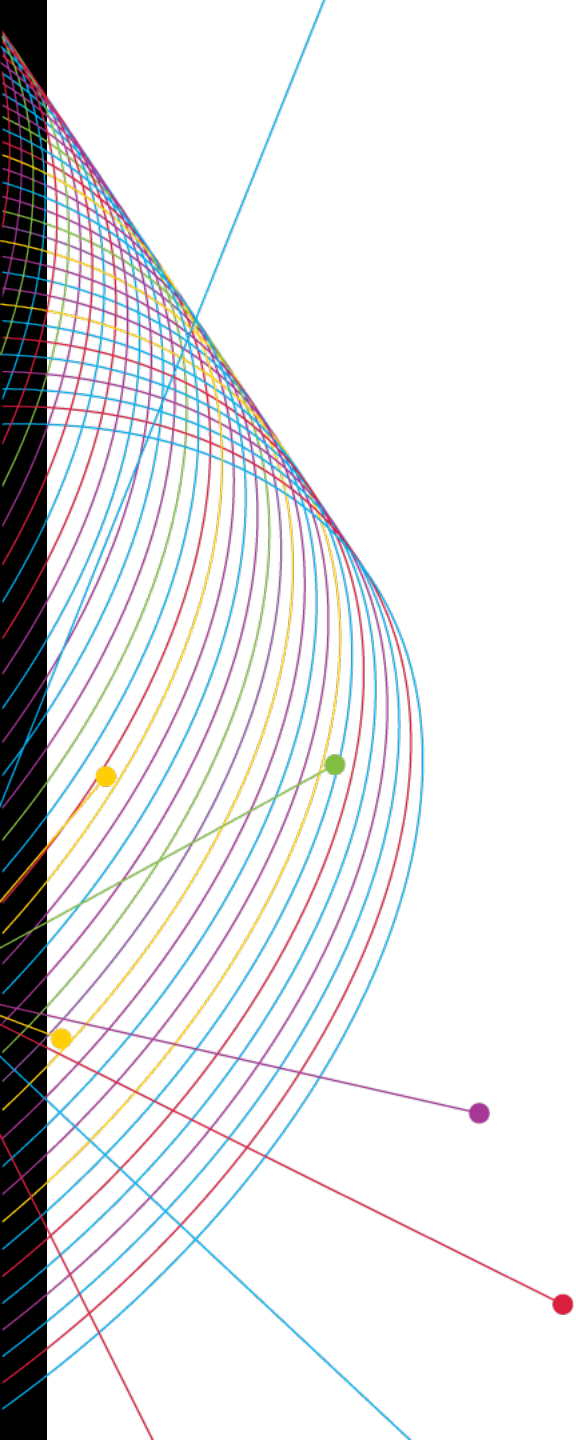
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## View of Foster Parents

- **While opinions of foster parents are relatively favorable, there is opportunity to increase awareness of the role of foster parents.**
  - Few Americans say they are extremely or very familiar with how foster parents help abused/neglected children while half are not at all familiar.
  - Just under half of Americans have an extremely or very favorable view of foster parents.
- **While some have considered becoming a foster parent, providing access to ample resources is unlikely to drive this intent any higher.**
  - Fewer than 1 in 3 adults have considered becoming a foster parent.
  - Nearly 7 in 10 of those *not* considering becoming a foster parent say that even with access to adequate resources, they are still somewhat/very unlikely to consider it.



# DETAILED FINDINGS

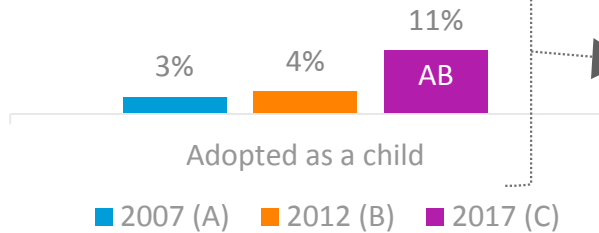


# EXPERIENCE WITH ADOPTION

# ADULTS WHO WERE ADOPTED

In 2017, with 1 in 10 American adults saying they were adopted as a child, adults are significantly more likely to say they were adopted compared to past years. Most commonly, adults indicate they were adopted through a private adoption.

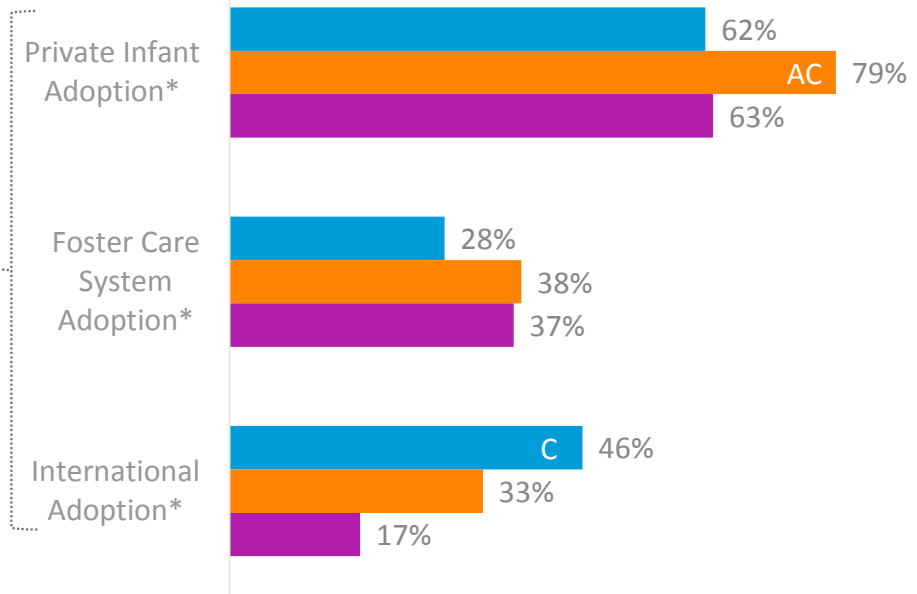
Adopted as a Child (% yes)



Type of Adoption (% yes)

Base: Adopted as a Child

\*Caution: very small base sizes (less than 100)



Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660; 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q705. Were you adopted as a child?

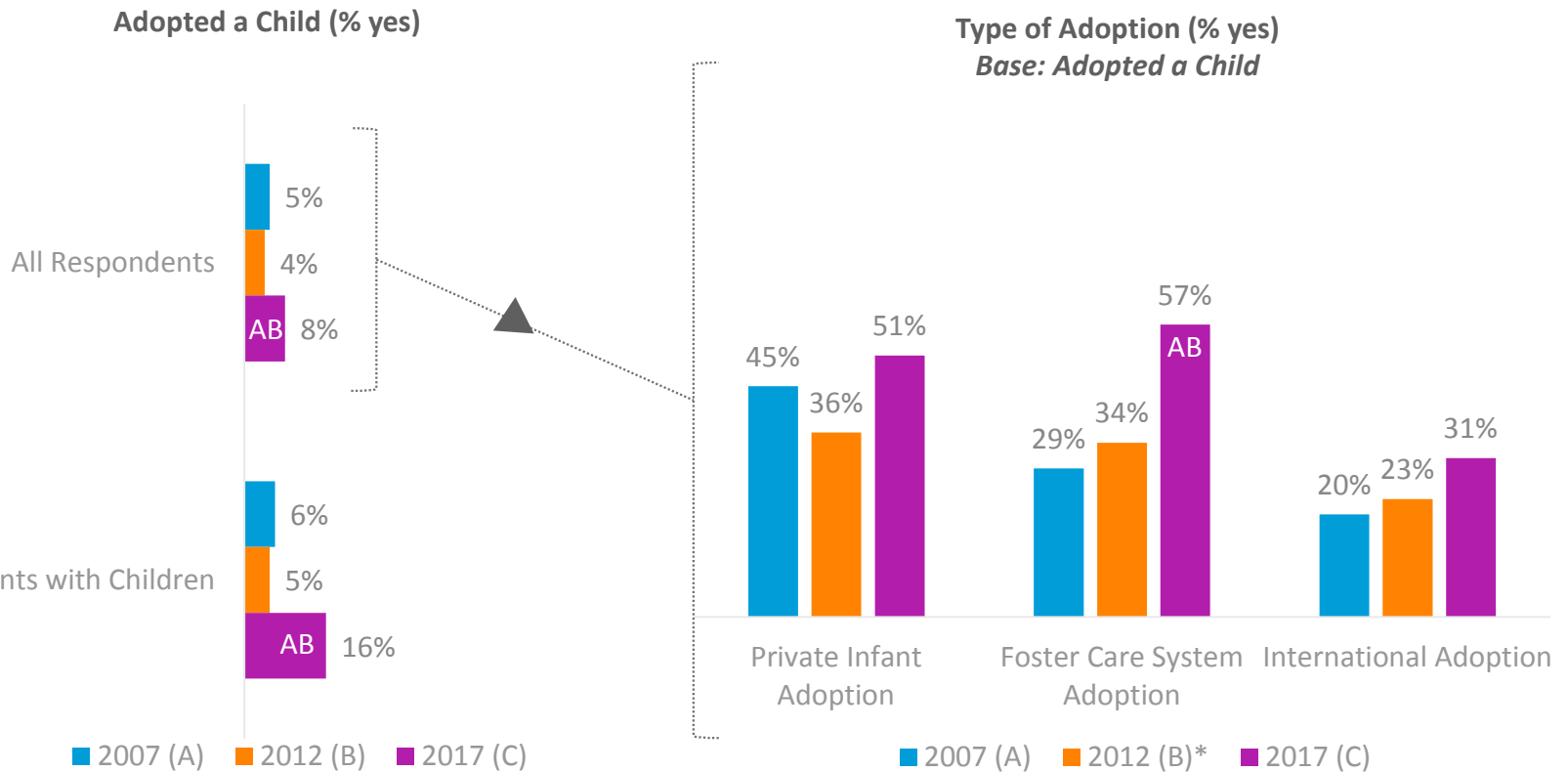
Base: Yes, adopted as a child (2007 n=51/22/16\*; 2012 n=62/16/9\*; 2017 n=119/40/26\*)

Q710/Q715/Q720. Were you adopted [as an infant privately in the US/from the US foster care system/from another country]? (% yes)

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# ADULTS WHO ADOPTED A CHILD

Fewer than 1 in 10 adults say they have adopted a child, though this has increased significantly over past years. The percentage of those who adopted through the foster care system is also higher than previous years.



Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660, 2012 n=1428; 217 n=1448); respondents with children (2007 n=494, 2012 n=236; 2017 n=402)

Q725. Have you adopted a child?

Base: Yes, adopted a child (2007 n=106; 2012 n=62\*; 2017 n=105)

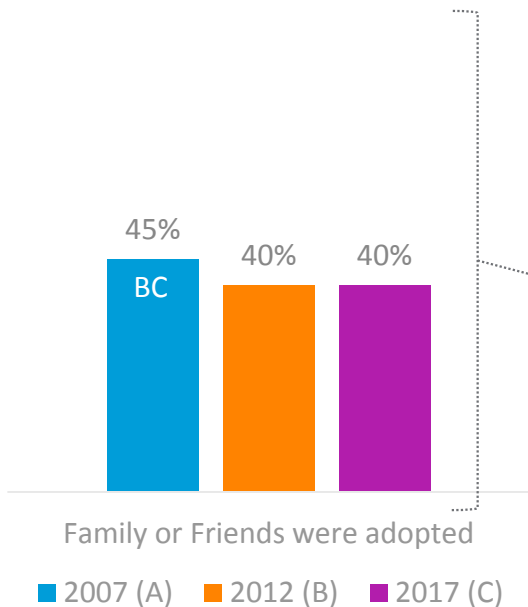
Q731. Did you adopt [an infant privately in the US/a child from the US foster care system/a child from another country]?

\*Note: small base size (less than 100)

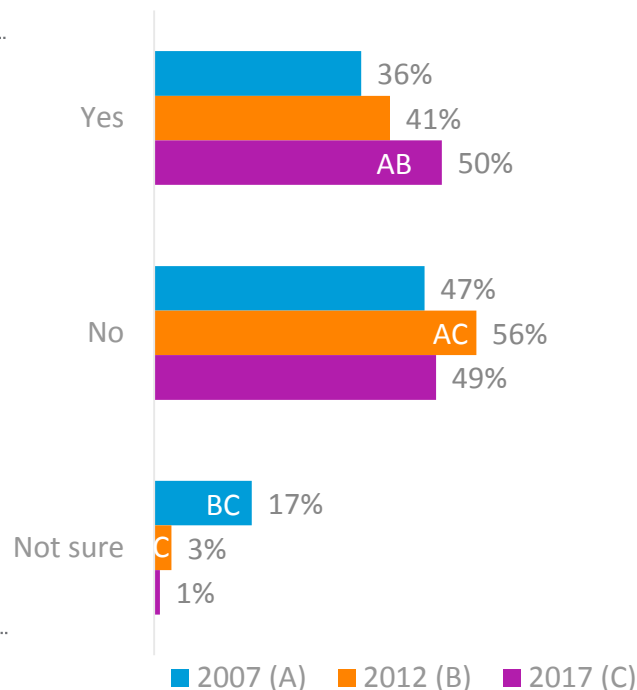
# ADULTS WITH INDIRECT TIES TO ADOPTION

Today, four in ten adults know friends/family who have been adopted. However, the percentage of people who know someone adopted through the foster care system has grown significantly since 2007.

Family or Friends Adopted (% yes)



Family or Friends Adopted from Foster Care System  
*Base: Adults who know someone who has been adopted*



Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660; 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q785. Has anyone in your family or among your close friends ever been adopted?

Base: Respondents with family or friends who have been adopted (2007 n=765; 2012 n=595; 2017 n=577)

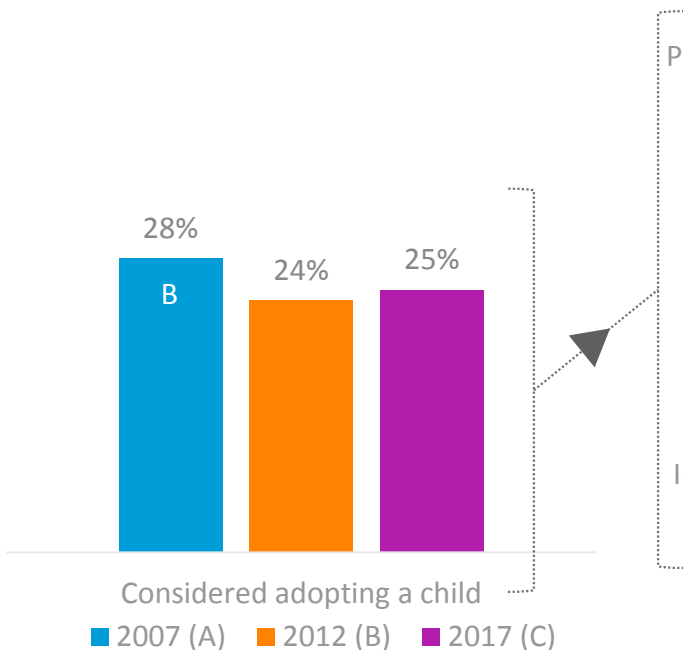
Q790. Has anyone in your family or among your close friends ever been adopted from the US foster care system?

# ADOPTION CONSIDERATION & PREFERENCES

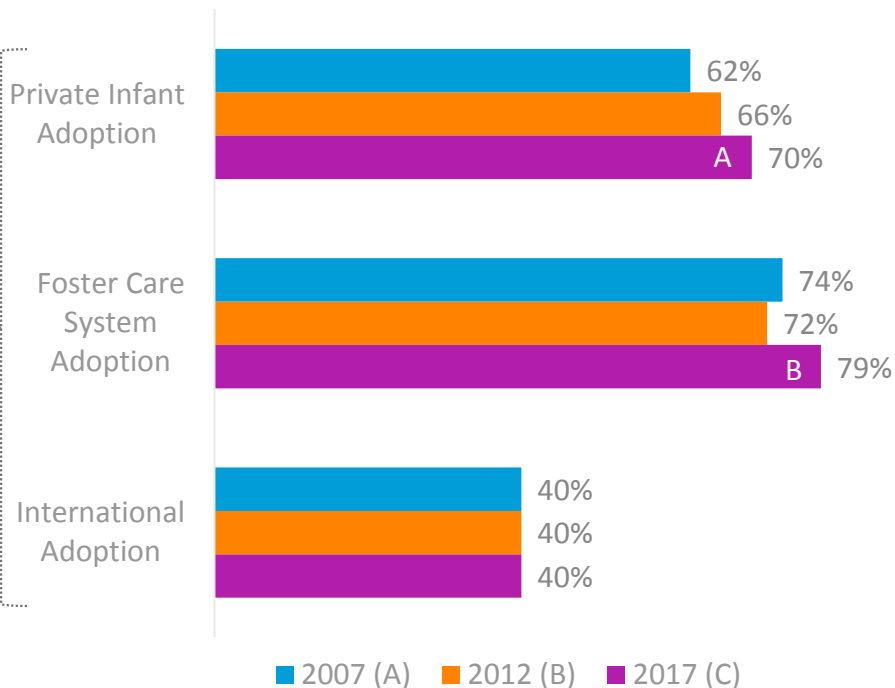
# CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION

Among those who haven't adopted, one quarter have ever considered it, on par with 2012 numbers. Among potential adopters, consideration of foster care adoption has increased significantly since 2012.

**Ever Considered Adoption (% yes)**  
*Base: Haven't Adopted/Refuse to Answer*



**Type of Adoption Considered (% yes)**  
*Base: Ever Considered Adopting*



**Base: Haven't adopted or refused to answer (2007 n=1554, 2012 n=1366; 2017 n=1343)**

Q735. Are you considering or have you ever considered adopting a child?

**Base: Considering Or Have Considered Adopting A Child (2007 n=460, 2012 n=331; 2017 n=357)**

Q740/Q750/Q775. Are you considering or have you ever considered adopting a child privately in the U.S. / from the U.S. foster care system/ another country? (% yes)

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# DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF ADULTS CONSIDERING ADOPTION

## ADULTS CONSIDERING ADOPTION ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE...

*Base: Has Not Adopted a Child or Refused to Answer*



### YOUNGER

**18-34: 48%**  
**35-44: 36%**  
 45-54: 20%  
 55-64: 13%  
 65+: 5%



### A MINORITY

White: 24%  
**Black: 35%**  
**Hispanic: 36%**



### SINGLE/NEVER MARRIED

**Singe/Never married: 34%**  
 Married: 23%  
**Living with Someone: 34%**  
 Divorced/Separated/  
 Widowed: 16%

## AND...



### KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN ADOPTED

**Family/Friend Adopted: 38%**  
 Family/Friend Not Adopted: 18%



### ALREADY HAVE KIDS

**Has Kids: 44%**  
 No Kids: 18%



### HAVE A HIGH OPINION OF ADOPTION

**Extremely/Very Favorable: 33%**  
 Somewhat/Not Favorable: 15%



# ADULTS CONSIDERING ADOPTION YEAR OVER YEAR

The demographics of adults considering adoption shift higher in several areas compared to 2012 and, in some cases, 2007.

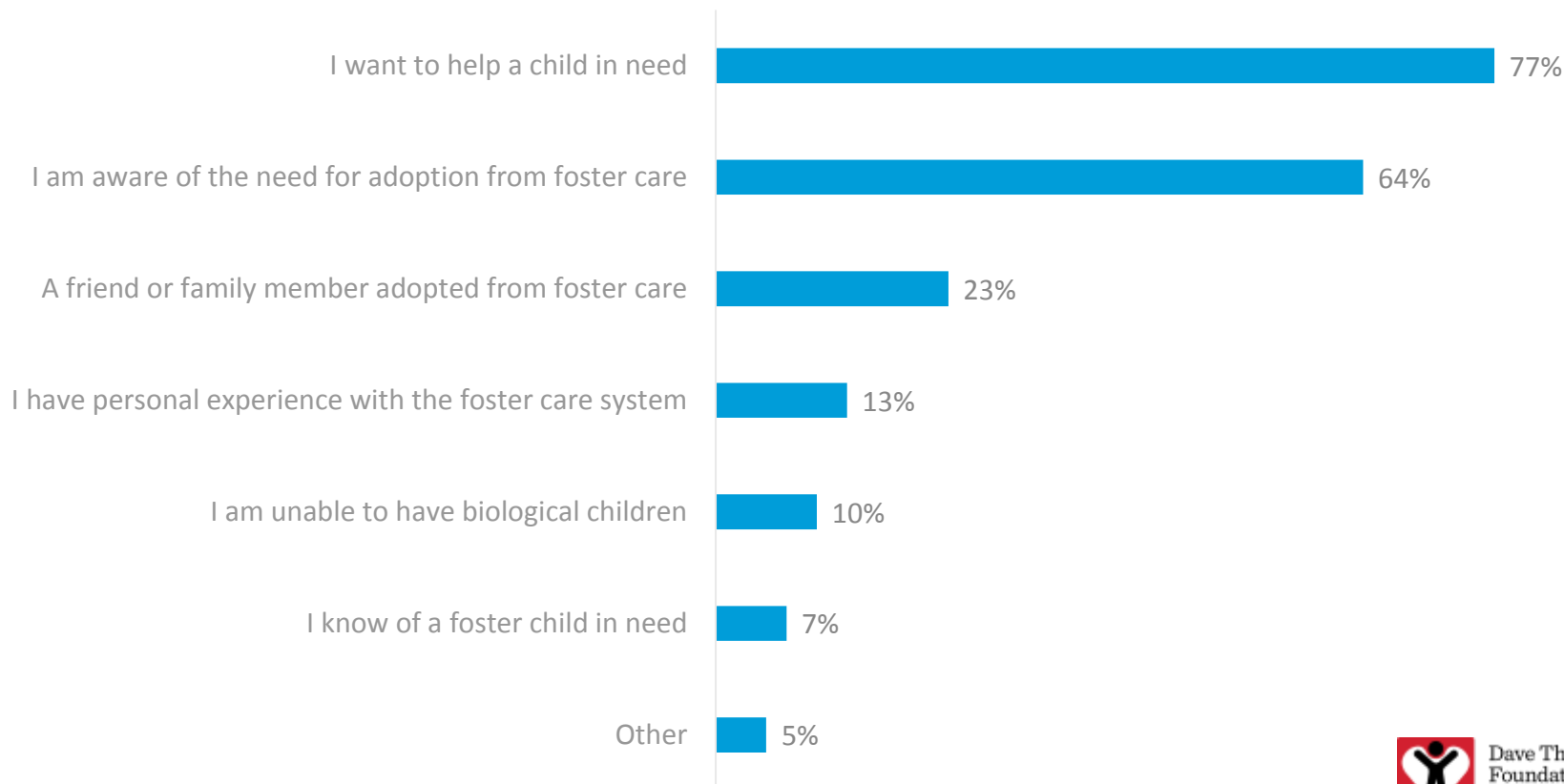
	2007 (A)	2012 (B)	2017 (C)		2007 (A)	2012 (B)	2017 (C)
Male	24%	22%	<b>23%</b>	Less than \$25K	29% B	23%	<b>27% B</b>
Female	30% B	26%	<b>27%</b>	\$25K - <\$50K	26%	31% AC	<b>27%</b>
18-24	43%	42%	<b>55% AB</b>	\$50K - <\$100K	30% B	23%	<b>28% B</b>
25-34	36%	38%	<b>45% AB</b>	\$100K+	32% BC	21%	<b>21%</b>
35-44	33% B	29%	<b>36% B</b>	White	24% B	20%	<b>24% B</b>
45-54	24% BC	20%	<b>20%</b>	Black/African American	33%	31%	<b>35% B</b>
55-64	22% BC	14%	<b>13%</b>	Hispanic	31%	31%	<b>36% AB</b>
65+	10% C	10% C	<b>5%</b>	Single/Never married	32% B	28%	<b>34% B</b>
High School or Less	21%	22%	<b>29% AB</b>	Married	27% BC	17%	<b>23% B</b>
Some College/Associate's Degree	32% BC	25% C	<b>20%</b>	Living with Partner	36% B	29%	<b>34% B</b>
College Grad	32% BC	27%	<b>27%</b>	Divorced/Separated/Widowed	19% C	20% C	<b>16%</b>
Post Grad	33% BC	23%	<b>28% B</b>				

Base: Haven't Adopted A Child Or Refused To Answer (2007 n=1554; 2012 n=1366; 2017 n=1343)  
Q735. Are you considering or have you ever considered adopting a child?

# REASONS TO ADOPT FROM FOSTER CARE

Over three-quarters of potential foster care adopters say they would adopt from foster care to help a child in need and about two-thirds say it would be due to their awareness of the need for adoption from foster care.

**Reasons to Adopt from Foster Care**  
*Base: Considered Foster Care Adoption*



Base: Respondents who are considering foster care adoption (n=279)

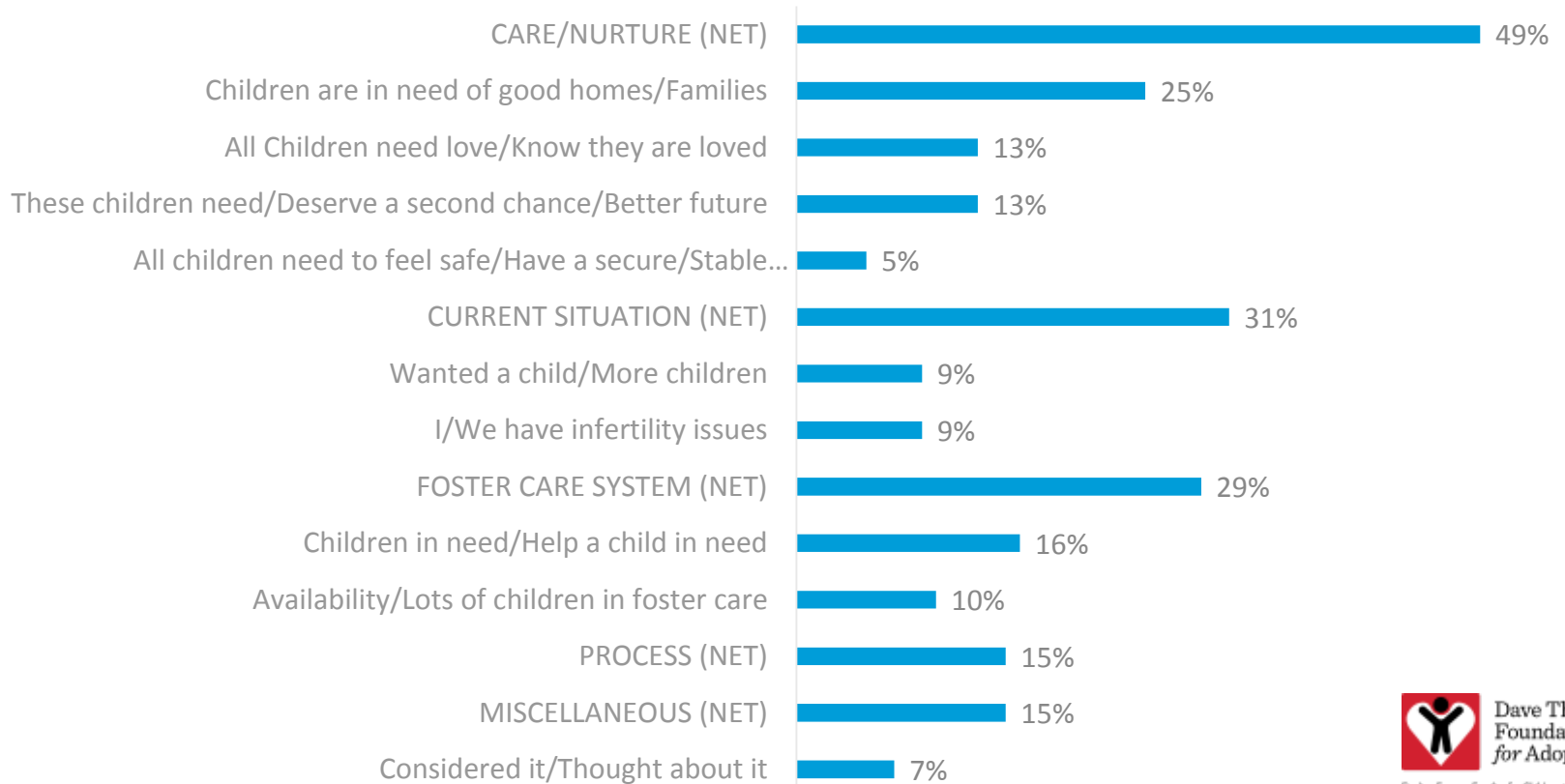
Q1000. Which of the following are reasons you would adopt from the U.S. foster care system?

# REASONS FOR CONSIDERING FOSTER CARE ADOPTION

Americans are most commonly considering foster care adoption for altruistic reasons – to help a child in need or because of the amount of kids in foster care. However, one third also identify their current situation as a key factor.

**Reasons for Considering Foster Care Adoption [Open-End]**

*Base: Considered Foster Care Adoption*



Base: Respondents who are considering foster care adoption (n=279)

Q755. Why have you considered or are considering adopting a child from the U.S. foster care system? [OPEN-END]

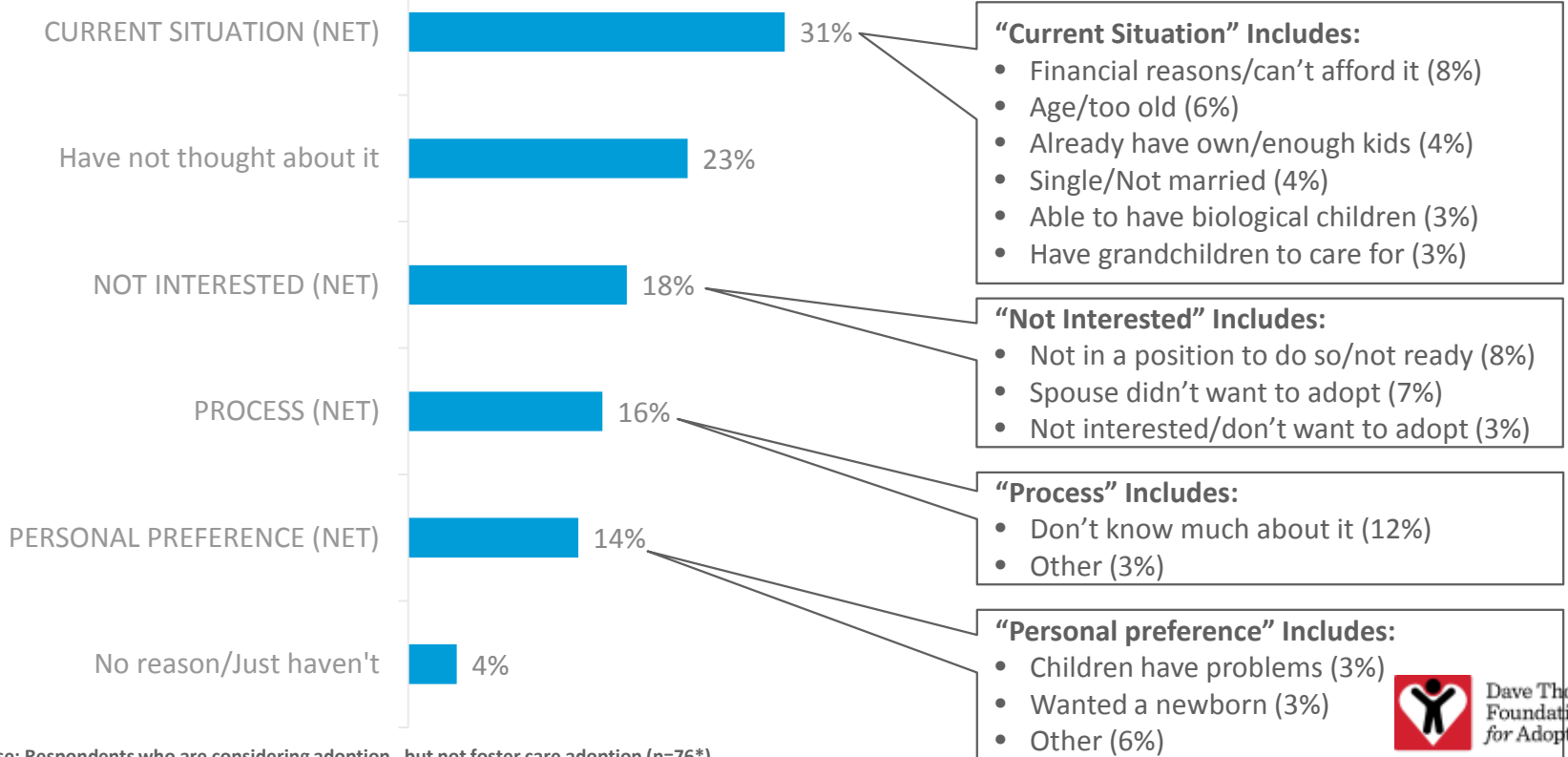
Note: Only responses of at least 4% shown

# REASONS FOR NOT CONSIDERING FOSTER CARE ADOPTION

Of those considering adoption, but not foster care adoption, about one third cite their current situation (including financial reasons, age, already having their own children, not being married, and/or ability to have biological children) as a reason for not considering foster care.

**Reasons for Not Considering Foster Care Adoption**  
**Base: Considered Adoption, But Not Foster Care Adoption**

\*Note: small base size (less than 100)



Base: Respondents who are considering adoption, but not foster care adoption (n=76\*)

Q762. Why have you not considered adopting a child from the U.S. foster care system? [OPEN-END]



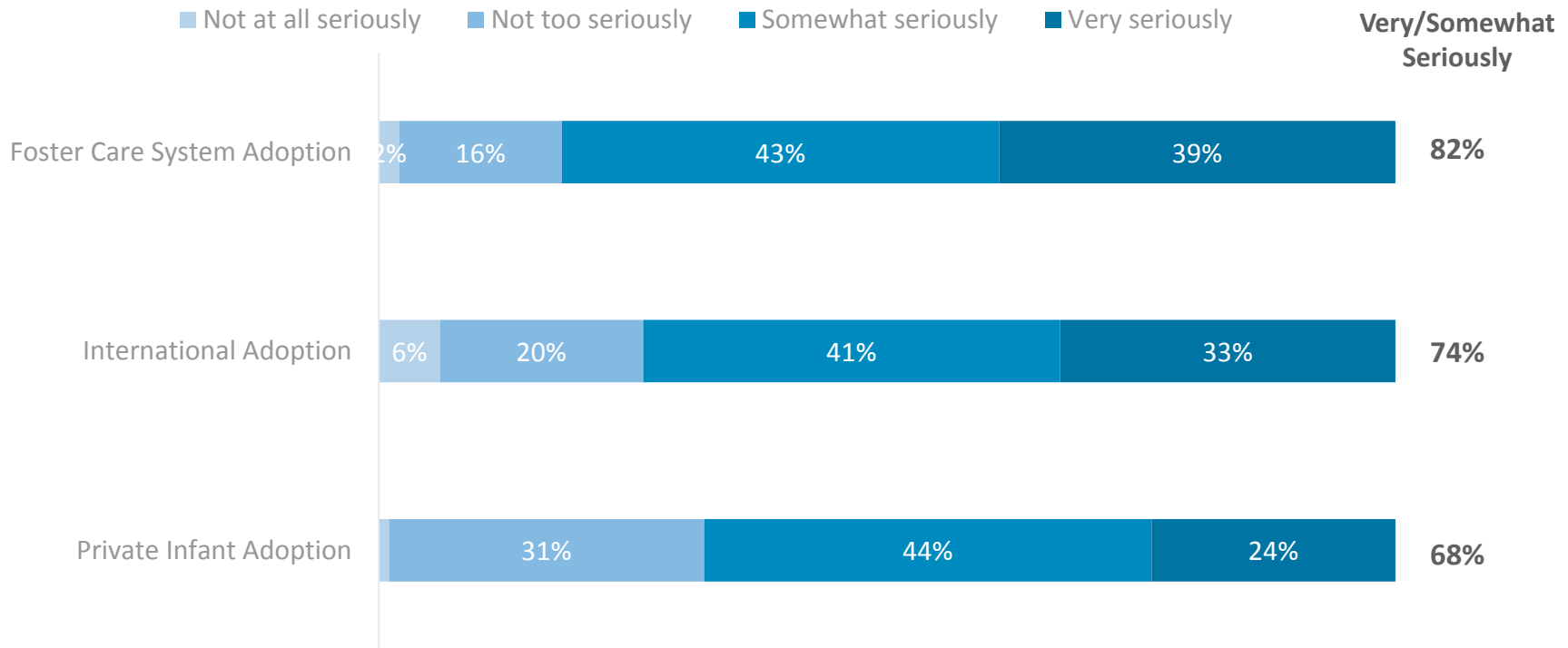
Finding Forever Families for Children in Foster Care

Note: Only responses of at least 3% shown

# SERIOUSNESS OF ADOPTION CONSIDERATION

Over 8 in 10 of those considering foster care adoption say they are either somewhat or very serious about it, while around 7 in 10 considering international or private infant adoption indicate the same level of seriousness.

**Seriousness of Consideration for Each Type of Adoption**  
*Base: Considered International/Foster Care/Private Adoption*



Base: Yes, have considered adopting a child through... Private Adoption (n=237); Foster Care System (n=397); International Adoption (n=221)  
 Q745/Q765/Q780. How seriously are you considering or have you considered [adopting a child through]...?

# SERIOUSNESS OF ADOPTION CONSIDERATION YEAR OVER YEAR

Very serious consideration of foster care system adoption and international adoption have both significantly increased over past years.

Reasons for Not Considering Foster Care Adoption  
Base: Considered International/Foster Care/Private Adoption

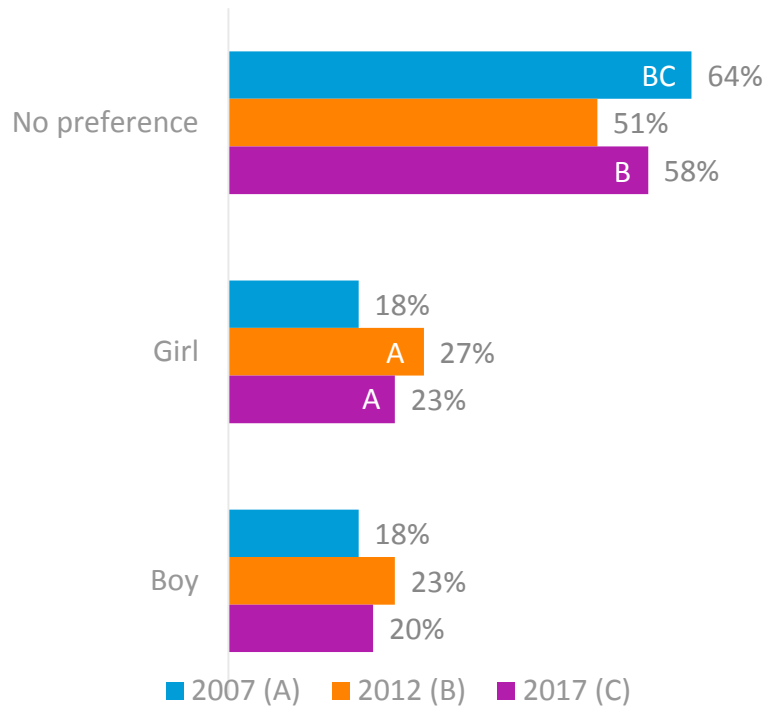
	Private Infant Adoption			Foster Care System Adoption			International Adoption		
	2007 (A)	2012 (B)	2017 (C)	2007 (A)	2012 (B)	2017 (C)	2007 (A)	2012 (B)	2017 (C)
Very seriously	13%	18%	24% A	18%	15%	39% AB	16%	11%	33% AB
Somewhat seriously	51%	46%	44%	49%	54% C	43%	45%	42%	41%
Not too seriously	32%	30%	31%	30% C	27% C	16%	30% C	44% AC	20%
Not at all seriously	5% C	6% C	1%	3%	3%	2%	9%	4%	6%

Base: Yes, have considered adopting a child (2007 n=267/320/190; 2012 n=203/230/124; 2017 n=237/397/221)  
Q745/Q765/Q780. How seriously are you considering or have you considered [adopting a child through]...?

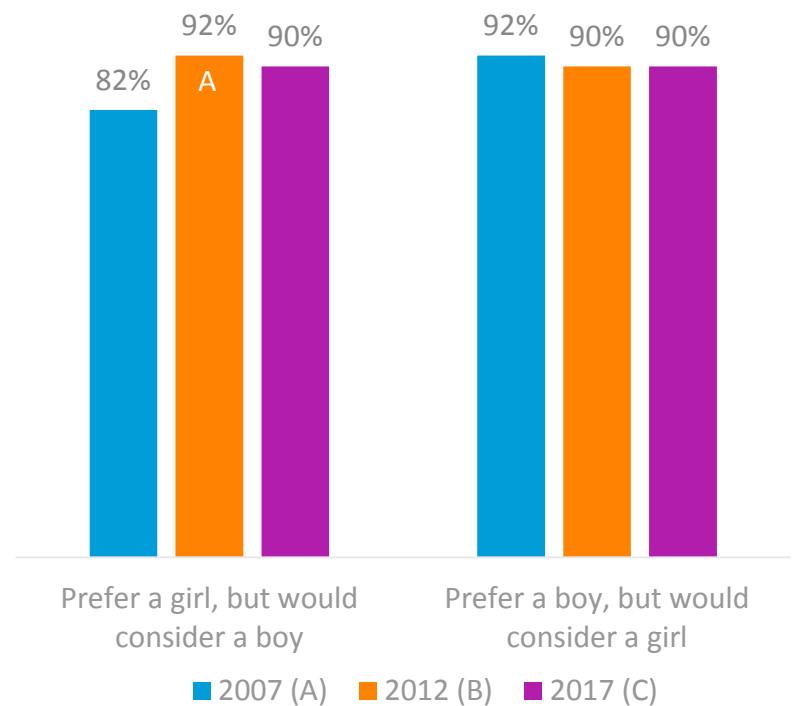
# PREFERRED GENDER OF FUTURE ADOPTED CHILD

Compared to 2012, those who either have adopted or are considering adoption (in general or from foster care) are more likely to not have a gender preference for a future adopted child; this is less likely than in 2007.

**Gender Preference When Adopting**  
*Base: Adopted or Considered Adopting (in general or foster care)*



**Consideration of Gender Opposite of Preference**  
*Base: Prefers a Girl / Prefers a Boy*



Base: Respondents who have adopted, are considering adoption, have adopted from the foster care system or have considered adopting from the FC System (2007 n=566, 2012 n=443, 2017 n=503)

Q950. If you were to consider adopting a child (or another child) and you could choose exactly the child you wanted, would you prefer to adopt a girl or boy?

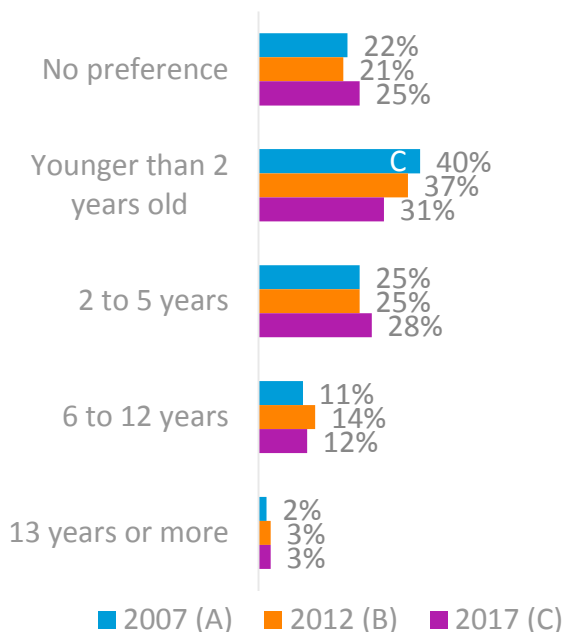
Base: Would prefer a girl (2007 n=110, 2012 n=116, 2017 n=114); Would prefer a boy (2007 n=92\*, 2012 n=89\*, 2017 n=104)

Q955. Would you consider a boy/girl?

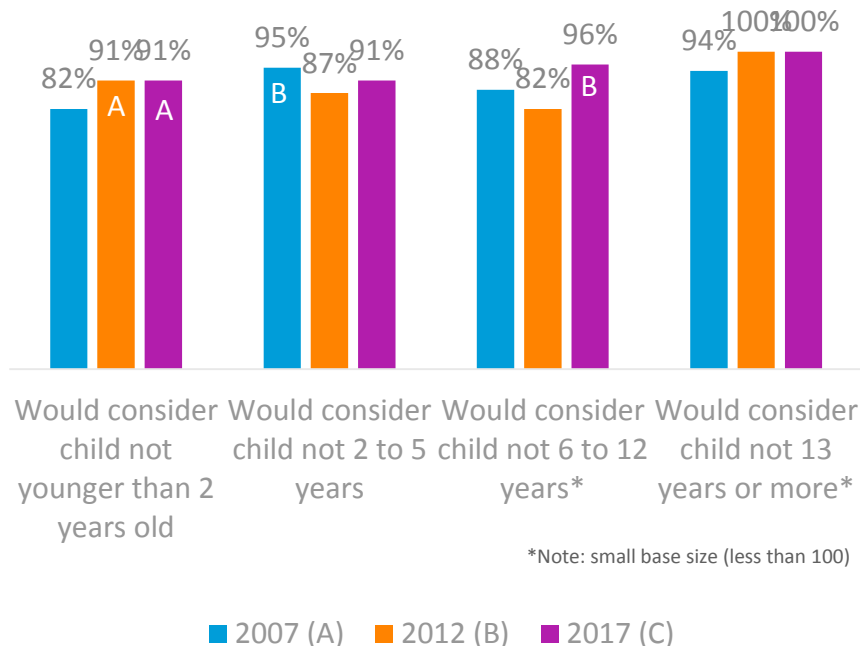
# PREFERRED AGE OF FUTURE ADOPTED CHILD

Those interested in general or foster care adoption continue to show a strong preference for younger children.

**Age Preference When Adopting**  
 Base: Adopted or Considered Adopting (in general or foster care)



**Willingness to Adopt a Child Other Than Preferred Age (% yes)**  
 Base: Preferred Age Range



\*Note: small base size (less than 100)

Base: Respondents who have adopted, are considering adoption, have adopted from the US foster care system or have considered adopting from the US foster care system (2007 n=566; 2012 n=443, 2017 n=503)

Q970. If you were to consider adopting a child (or another child) and you could choose exactly the child you wanted, would you prefer to adopt a child younger than 2, a child 2 to 5 years old, a child 6 to 12 years old, or a child 13 years old or older?

Base: Prefers child younger than age 2 (2007 n=241; 2012 n=165; 2017 n=145); Prefers child 2 to 5 years old (2007 n=136; 2012 n=100; 2017 n=123); Prefers child 6 to 12 years old (2007 n=73\*; 2012 n=47\*; 2017 n=54\*); Prefers child 13+ (2007 n=10\*; 2012 n=6\*; 2017 n=18\*)

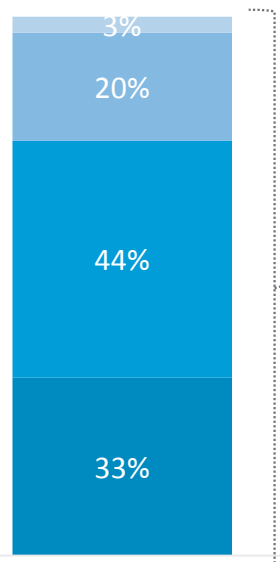
Q975. Would you consider adopting a child other than a...?



# AGE PREFERENCES OF FUTURE ADOPTED CHILD

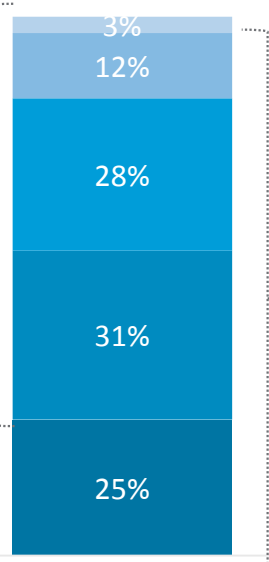
Among those who state an initial preference for a non-teen, nearly 3 in 10 say they would consider a teen for adoption.

**Youngest Acceptable Age Range**  
Base: Prefers child at least 2



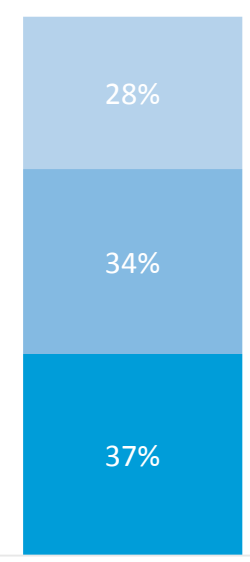
Prefer a child at least two years old

**Age Preference When Adopting**  
Base: Adopted or Considered Adopting (in general or foster care)



Have adopted or considered

**Oldest Acceptable Age Range**  
Base: Prefers child younger than 12



Prefer a child twelve years old or younger

- No preference
- Younger than 2 years old
- 2 to 5 years old
- 6 to 12 years old
- 13 years or older

**Base: Have Adopted Or Considered Adoption (n=503)**

Q970. If you were to consider adopting a child (or another child) and you could choose exactly the child you wanted, would you prefer to adopt a child younger than 2, a child 2 to 5 years old, a child 6 to 12 years old, or a child 13 years old or older?

**Base: Would Prefer A Child That Is At Least Two Years Old (n=217)**

Q976. What is the oldest age range you would consider adopting?

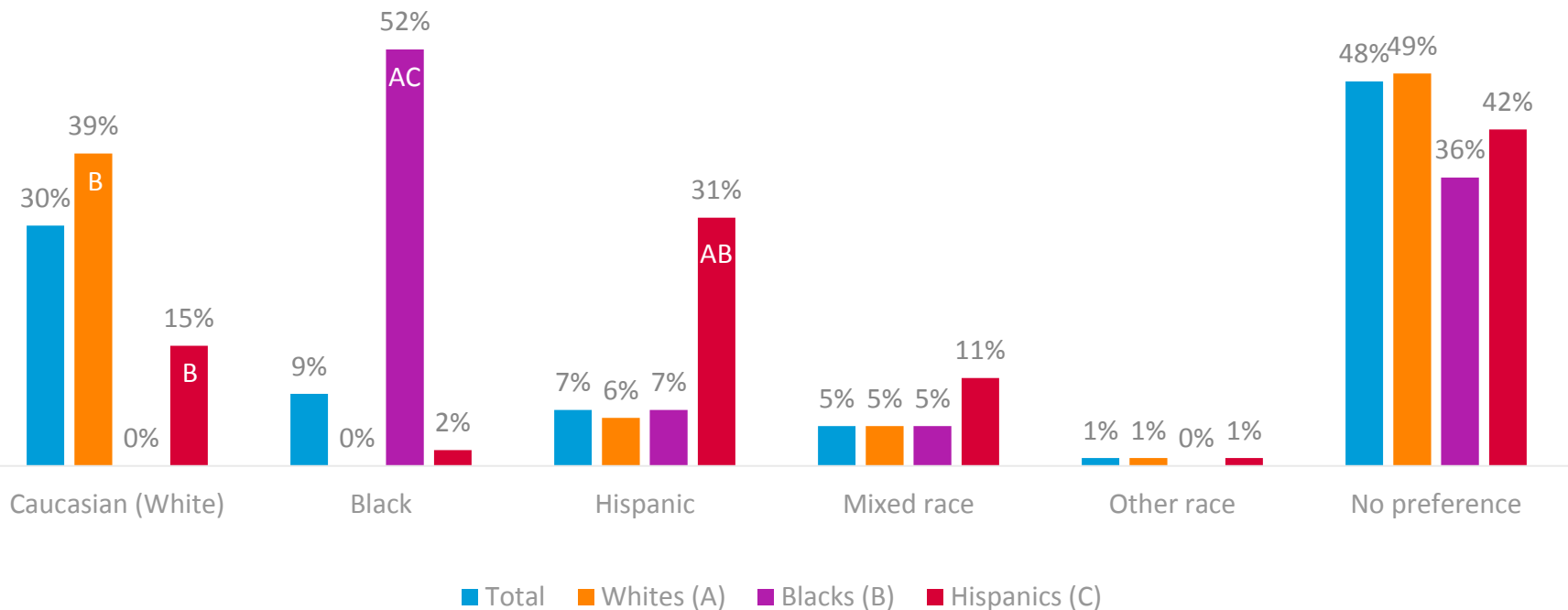
**Base: Would Prefer A Child That Is Twelve Years Old Or Younger (n=362)**

Q977. What is the youngest age range you would consider adopting?

# RACE PREFERENCES OF FUTURE ADOPTED CHILD

While many have no preference for the race of an adopted child, 3 in 10 prefer a Caucasian child. Adults of each race are significantly more likely to prefer a child who matches their own race.

**Race Preference When Adopting**  
*Base: Adopted or Considered Adopting (in general or foster care)*



Base: Respondents who have adopted, are considering adoption, have adopted from the US foster care system or have considered adopting from the US foster care System (n=503; White n=332; Black n=115; Hispanic n=132)

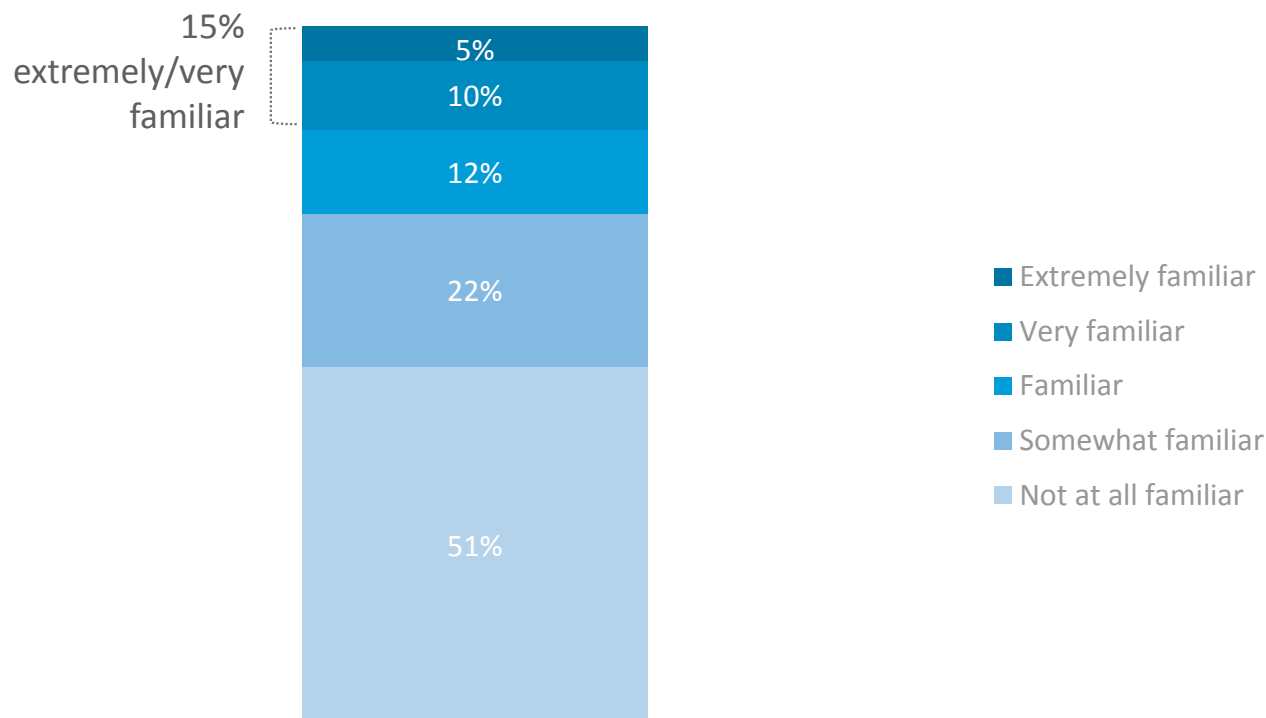
Q960. If you were to consider adopting a child (or another child) and you could choose exactly the child you wanted, would you prefer to adopt a...?

# FOSTER PARENT CONSIDERATION

# FAMILIARITY WITH FOSTER PARENTS ROLE

Over half of adults say they are not at all familiar with what foster parents do to care for children who have been abused or neglected.

Familiarity with Foster Parent Role in Caring for Abused/Neglected Children

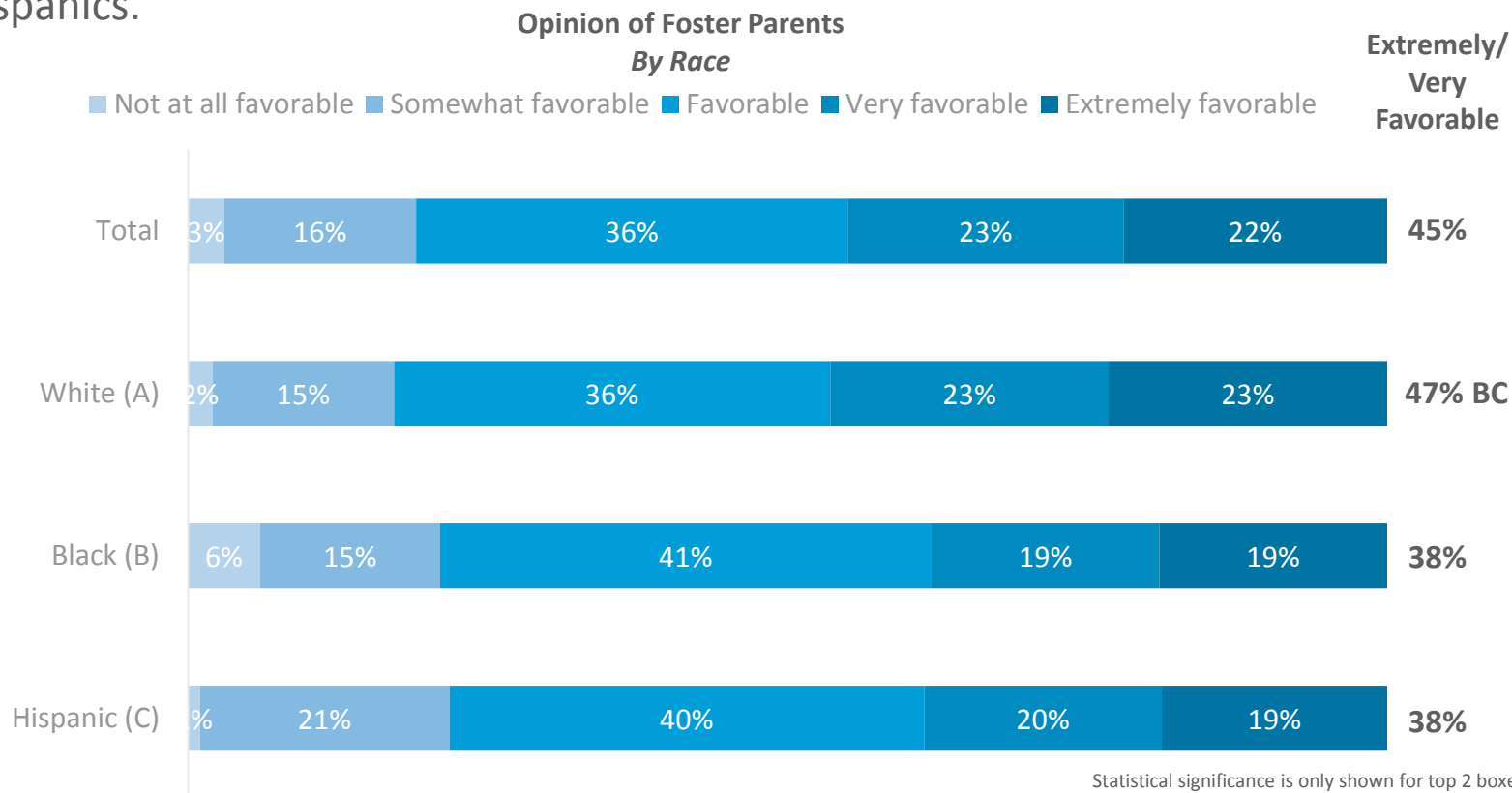


Base: All Qualified Respondents (n=1448)

Q832. How familiar are you with what foster parents do to care for children who have been abused or neglected?

# OPINION OF FOSTER PARENTS BY RACE

Over 4 in 10 Americans say they feel extremely/very favorable towards foster care parents. White adults are more likely favorable of foster parents, compared to Blacks and Hispanics.

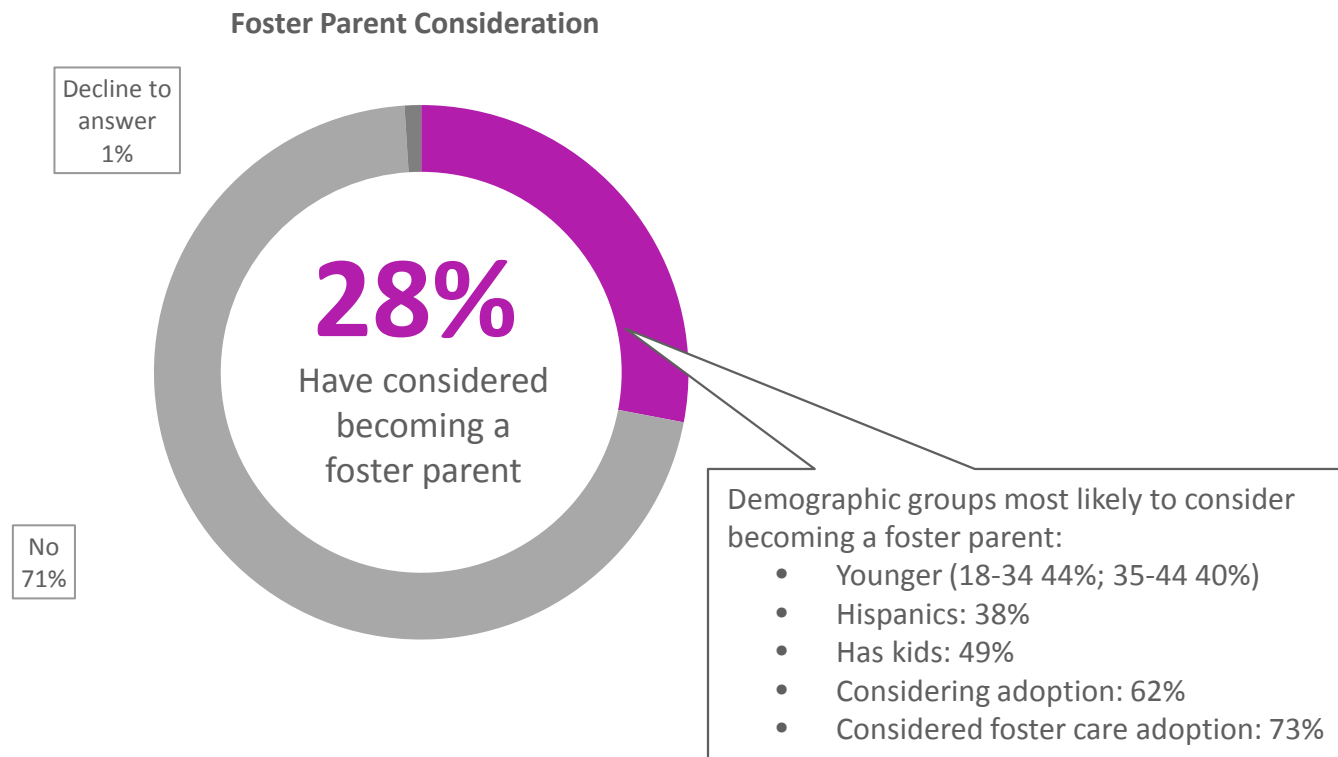


Base: All qualified respondents. (White n=1039, Black n=267, Hispanic n=289)

Q806. In general, what is your opinion of adoption of a child from the foster care system?

# FOSTER PARENT CONSIDERATION

Nearly 3 in 10 American adults have considered becoming a foster parent.



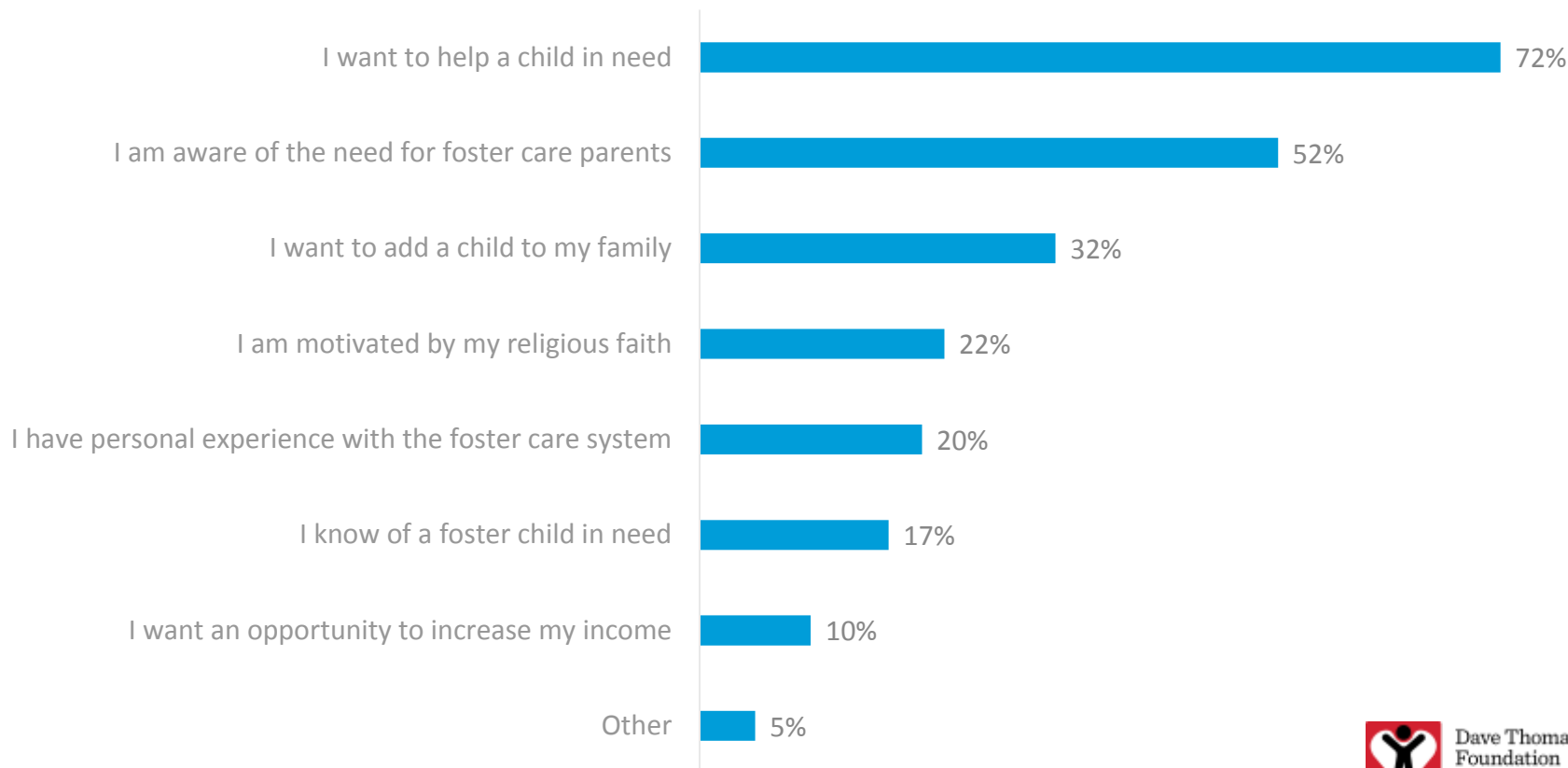
Base: All Qualified Respondents (n=1448)

Q772. Have you ever considered becoming a foster parent (i.e., a person who acts as parent and guardian for a child in place of the child's natural parents but without legally adopting the child)?

# REASONS FOR CONSIDERING BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT

Over 7 in 10 say they are considering becoming a foster parent to help a child in need, while half are aware of the need for foster parents.

Reasons for Considering Becoming a Foster Parent  
Base: Considered Becoming a Foster Parent



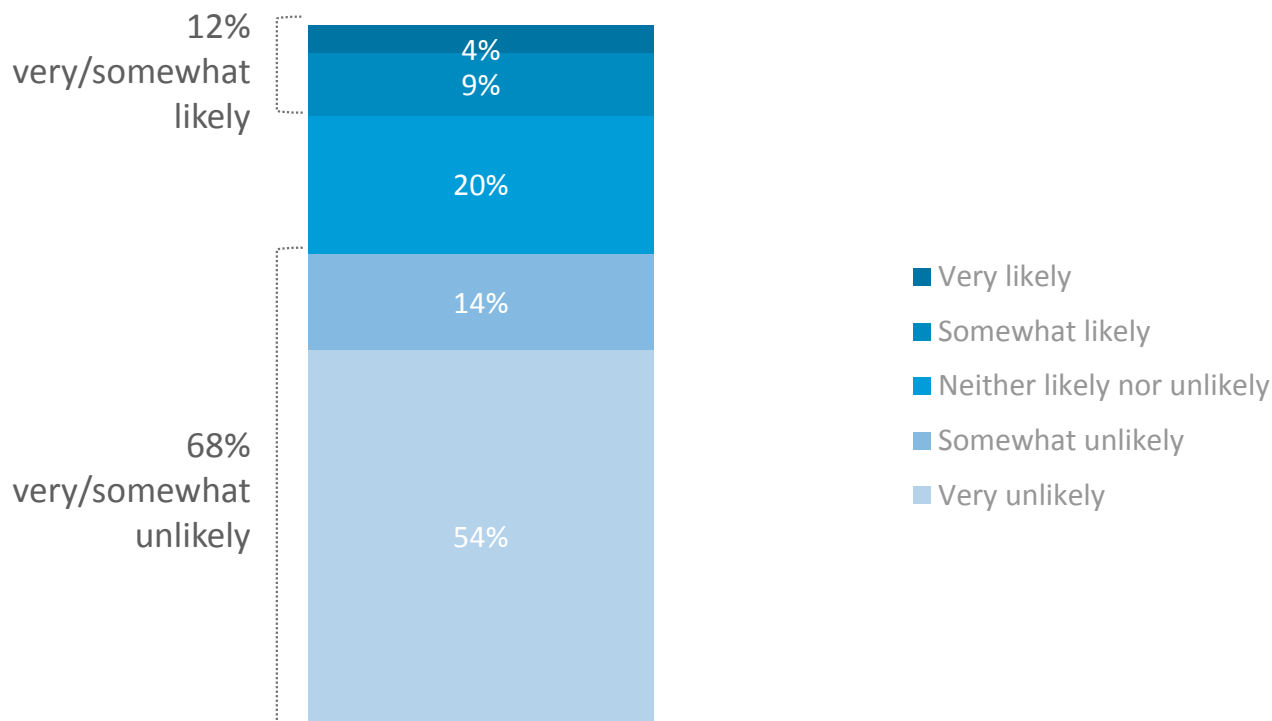
Base: Has considered becoming a foster parent (n=408)

Q773. Which of the following are reasons you have considered becoming a foster parent?

# LIKELIHOOD OF BECOMING FOSTER PARENT WITH ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Being presented with adequate resources has little effect on the likelihood to become a foster parent among those who are not currently considering it.

Likelihood of Considering Foster Parent with Proper Resources  
Base: Has not considered becoming a foster parent



Base: Has not considered becoming a foster parent (n=1025)

Q774. How likely would you be to consider becoming a foster parent if you were certain that you would receive adequate support in caring for a child placed in your home?

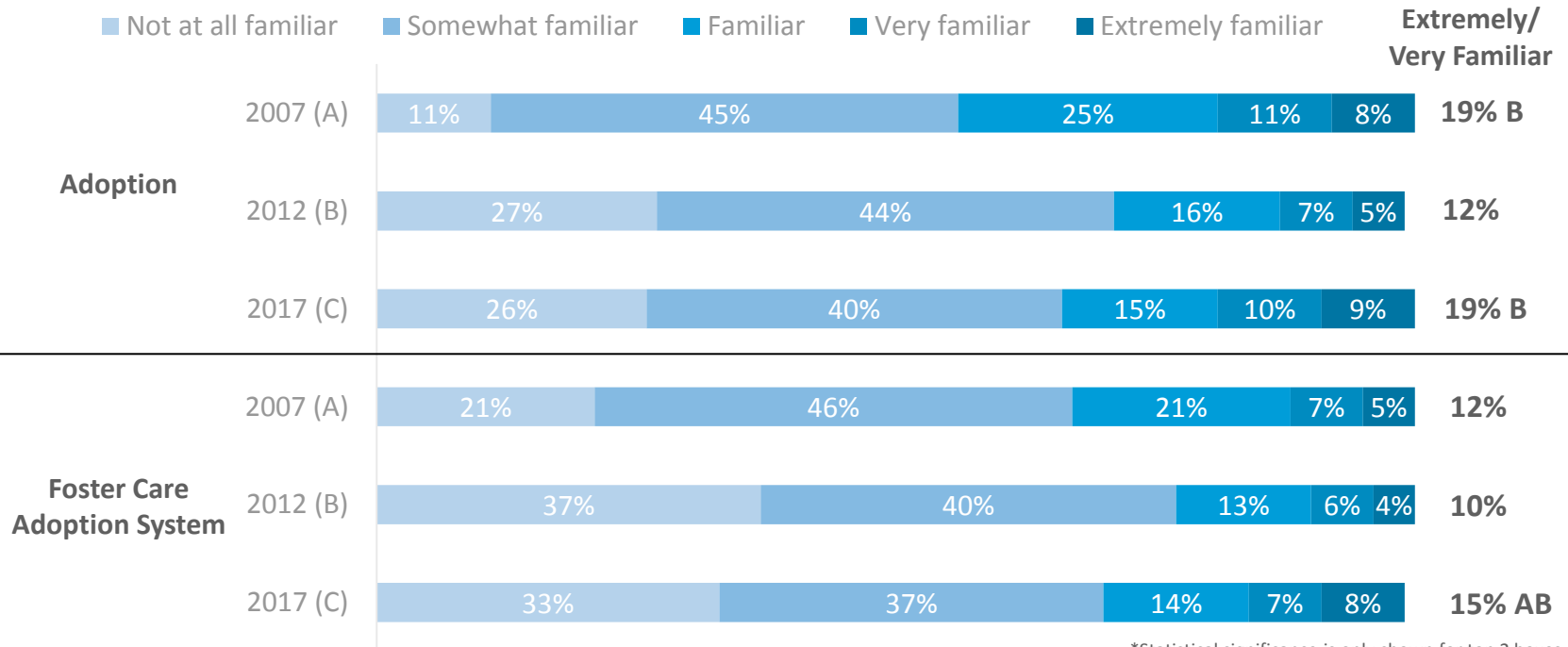


# FAMILIARITY WITH & KNOWLEDGE OF ADOPTION

# FAMILIARITY WITH TOPIC OF ADOPTION

While familiarity with adoption in general saw a decrease in 2012, it significantly rose this year, returning to 2007 numbers. Despite low familiarity overall, high familiarity with foster care adoption has increased significantly over past years.

Familiarity with Adoption in General & the Foster Care Adoption System



\*Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660; 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q803. In general, how familiar would you say that you are with the topic of adoption?

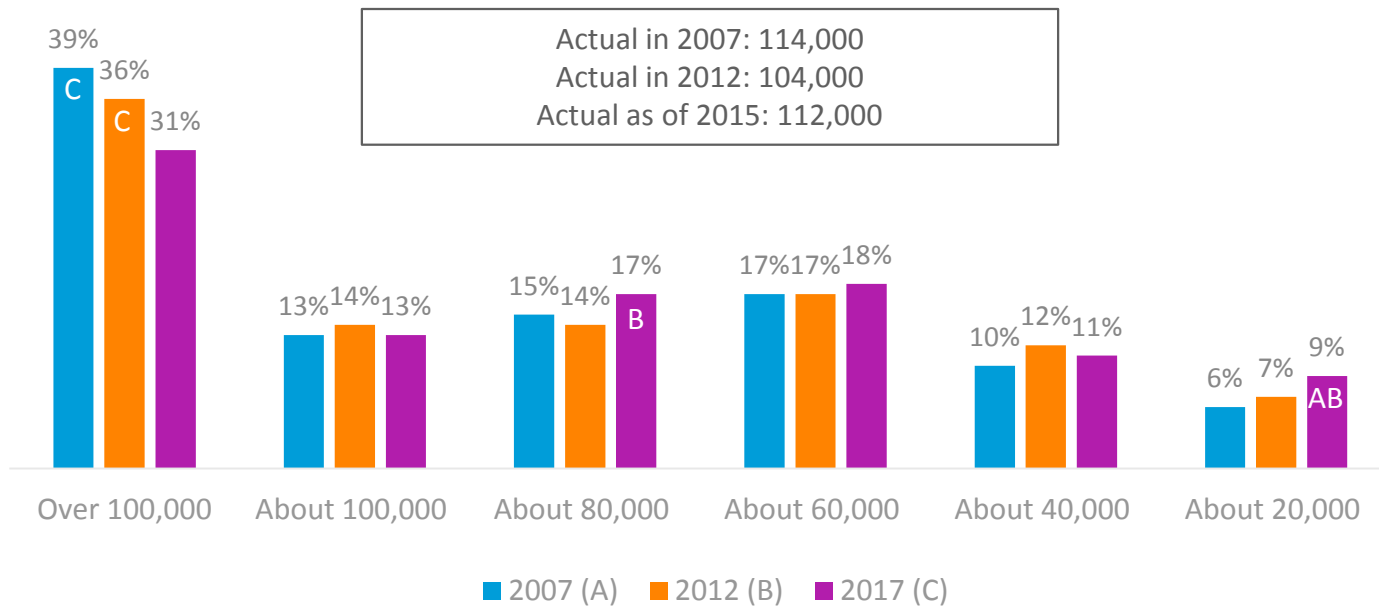
Q815. In general, how familiar would you say that you are with the topic of foster care adoption?

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# ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE AVAILABLE TO BE ADOPTED

About 3 in 10 adults accurately estimate the number of children in foster care who are available for adoption, significantly less than in previous years.

Estimated Number of Children Available for Adoption in Foster Care



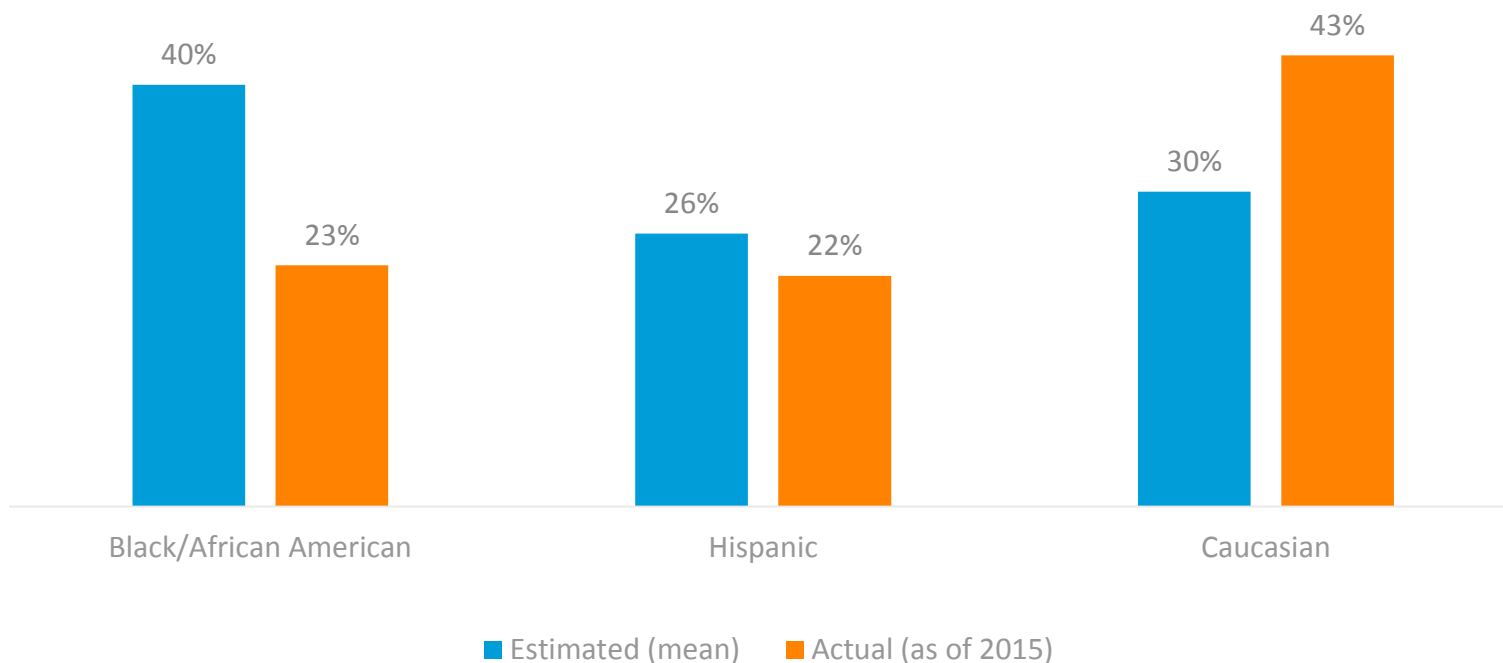
Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660; 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q835. Based on what you know of adoption, please select the answer that you think most closely estimates the number of children in foster care available to be adopted in the US.  
[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats\\_research/index.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/index.htm)

# ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY CHILD'S RACE

On average, adults tend to overestimate the number of Black/African American and Hispanic children in foster care, while they underestimate the number of Caucasians.

Average Estimated Percent of Children in Foster Care Available for Adoption  
(mean % vs. actual %)



Base: All qualified respondents (n=1448)

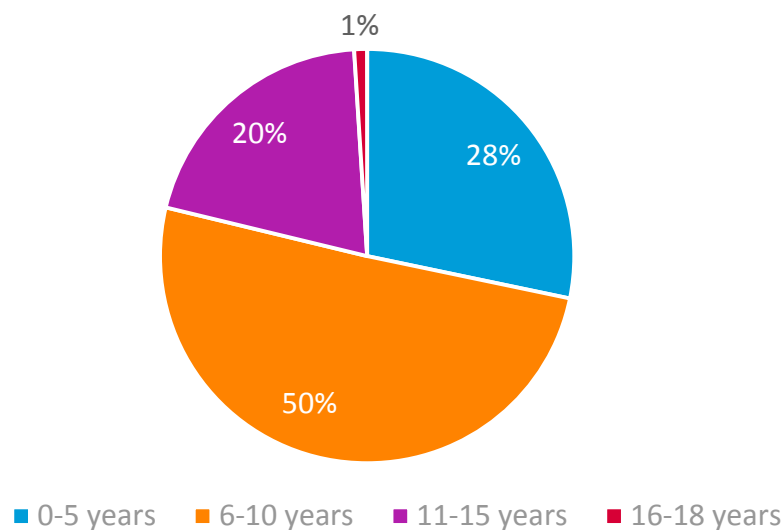
Q845a. Based on what you know of adoption, what do you think is the percentage of children in foster care in the US who are: Black/African American, Hispanic, Caucasian  
[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats\\_research/index.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/index.htm)

# AVERAGE AGE OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE AVAILABLE TO BE ADOPTED

On average, adults closely estimate the average age of children in foster care.

## Estimated Average Age of Children in Foster Care Available to be Adopted

Estimated age (mean): 8.1 years  
Actual as of 2015 (mean): 8.6 years



Base: All qualified respondents (n=1448)

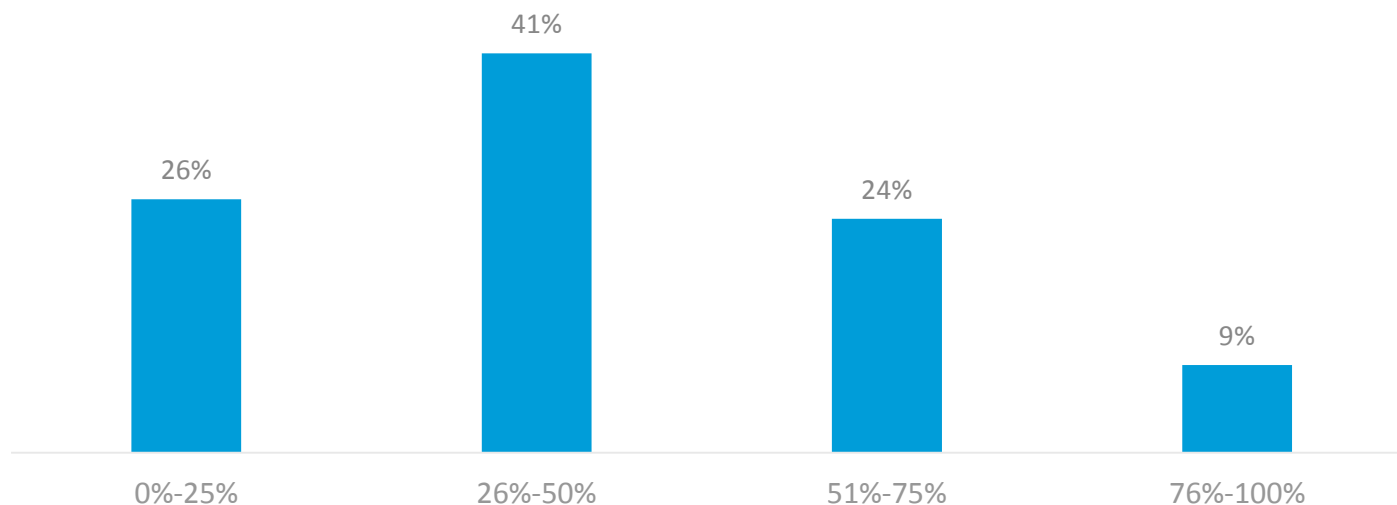
Q840a. Based on what you know of adoption, what do you think is the average age of children in foster care that are available to be adopted in the US?

# PERCENT OF CHILDREN AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE

Over 4 in 10 say 26%-50% of children age out of foster care (45.5% on average), far above the actual percentage of 9%.

## Estimated Average Percent of Children Who Age Out of Foster Care

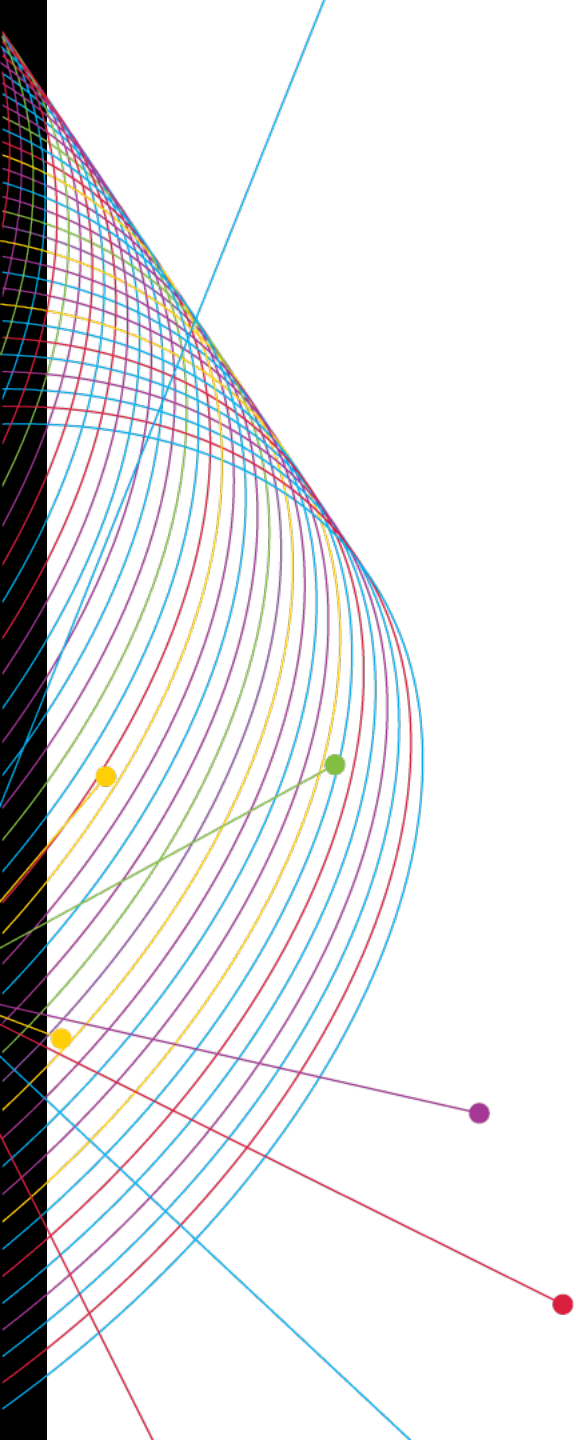
Estimated percentage (mean): 45.5%  
Actual as of 2015: 9%



Base: All qualified respondents (n=1448)

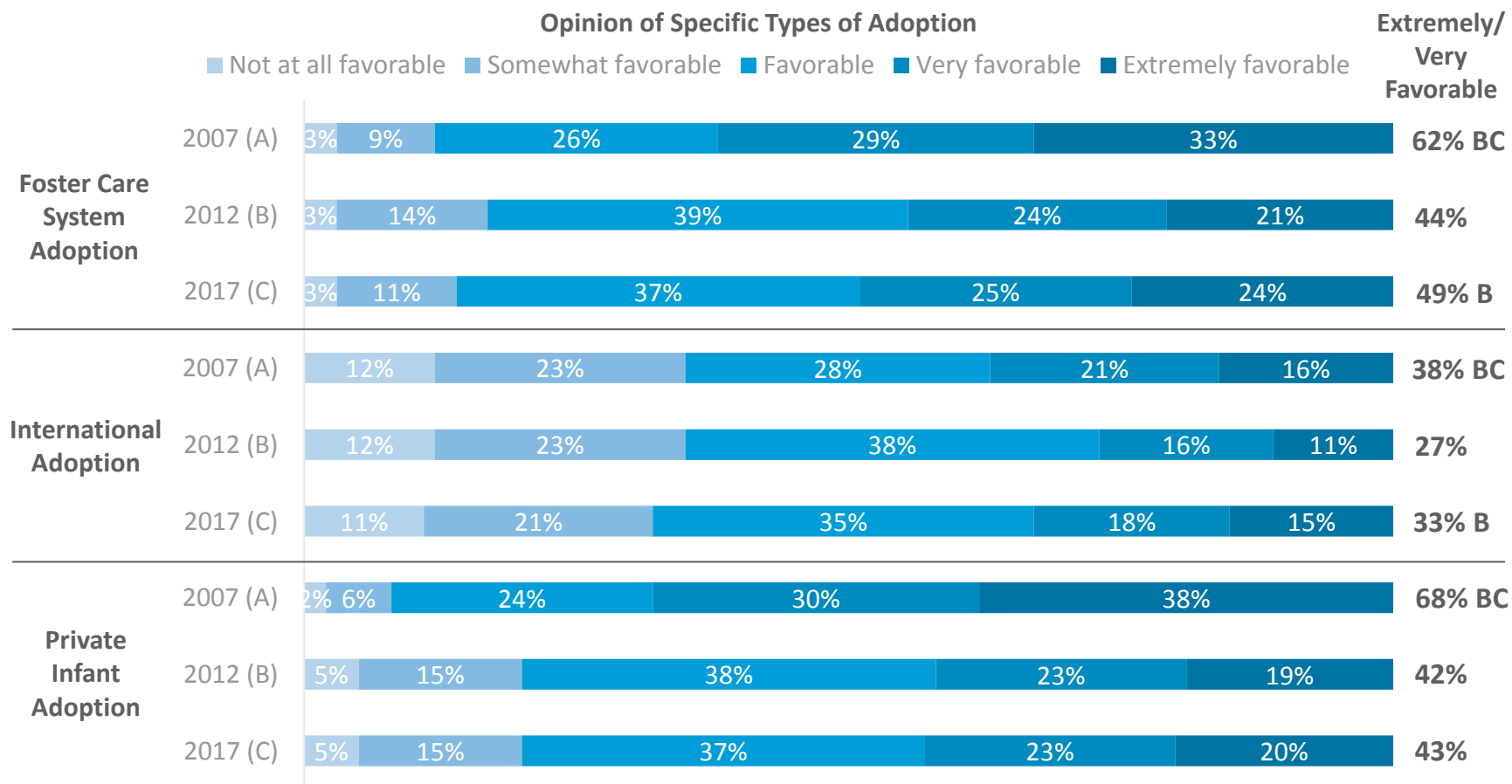
Q860. What percent of children do you think become adults (i.e., turn 18 or 21 depending on the state) and leave the foster care system in the US without being adopted?  
[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats\\_research/index.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/index.htm)

# OPINIONS OF ADOPTION



# OPINION OF ADOPTION TYPES

Nearly half of adults have a highly favorable opinion of adoptions from the foster care system, significantly higher than 2012, and more than international or private adoption. However, familiarity of each type has dropped significantly since 2007.



Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660, 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)  
 Q806. In general, what is your opinion of private infant adoption?

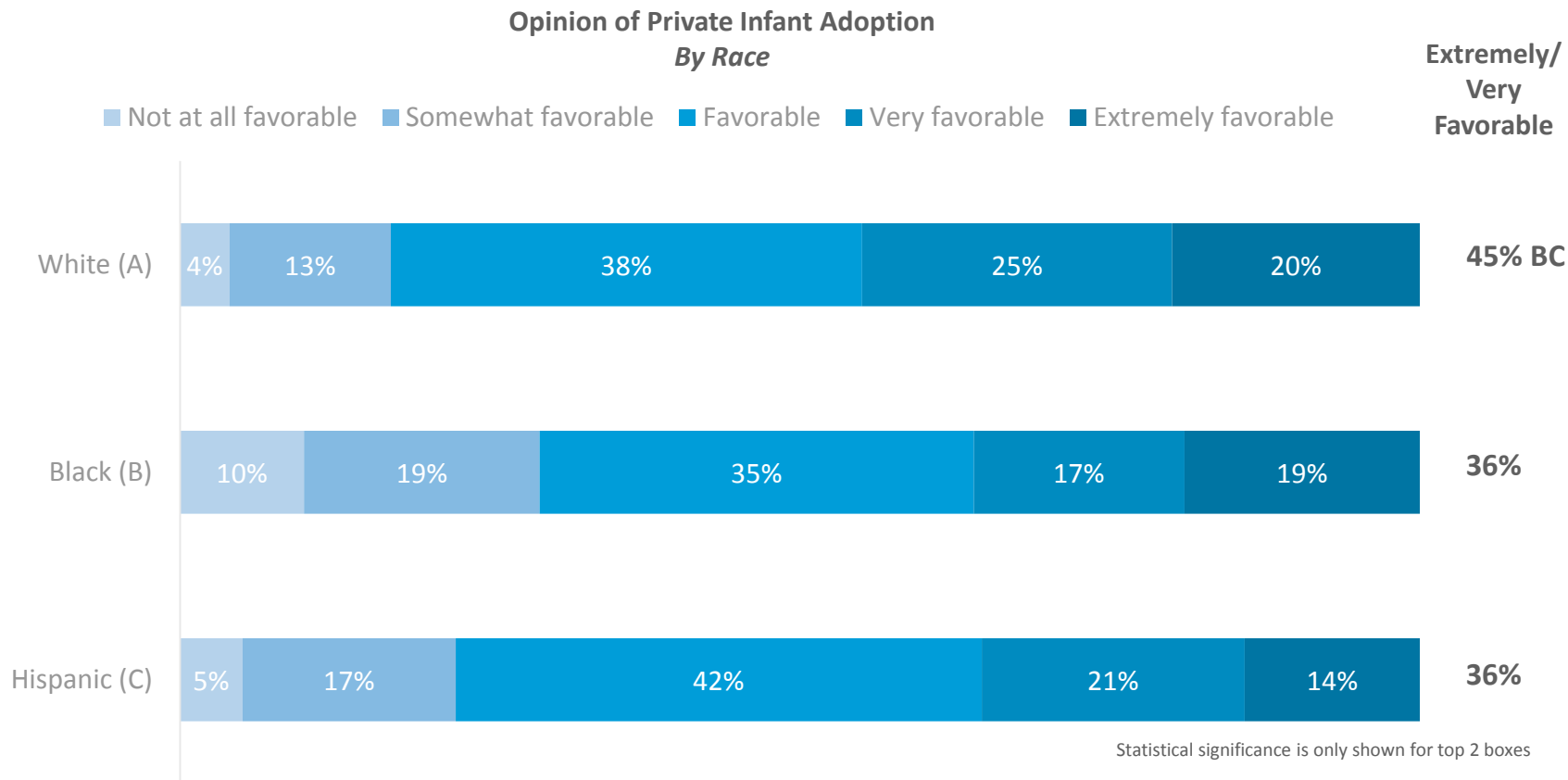
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

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# OPINION OF PRIVATE INFANT ADOPTION BY RACE

Whites are significantly more likely than Blacks and Hispanics to feel extremely/very favorably of private adoption.

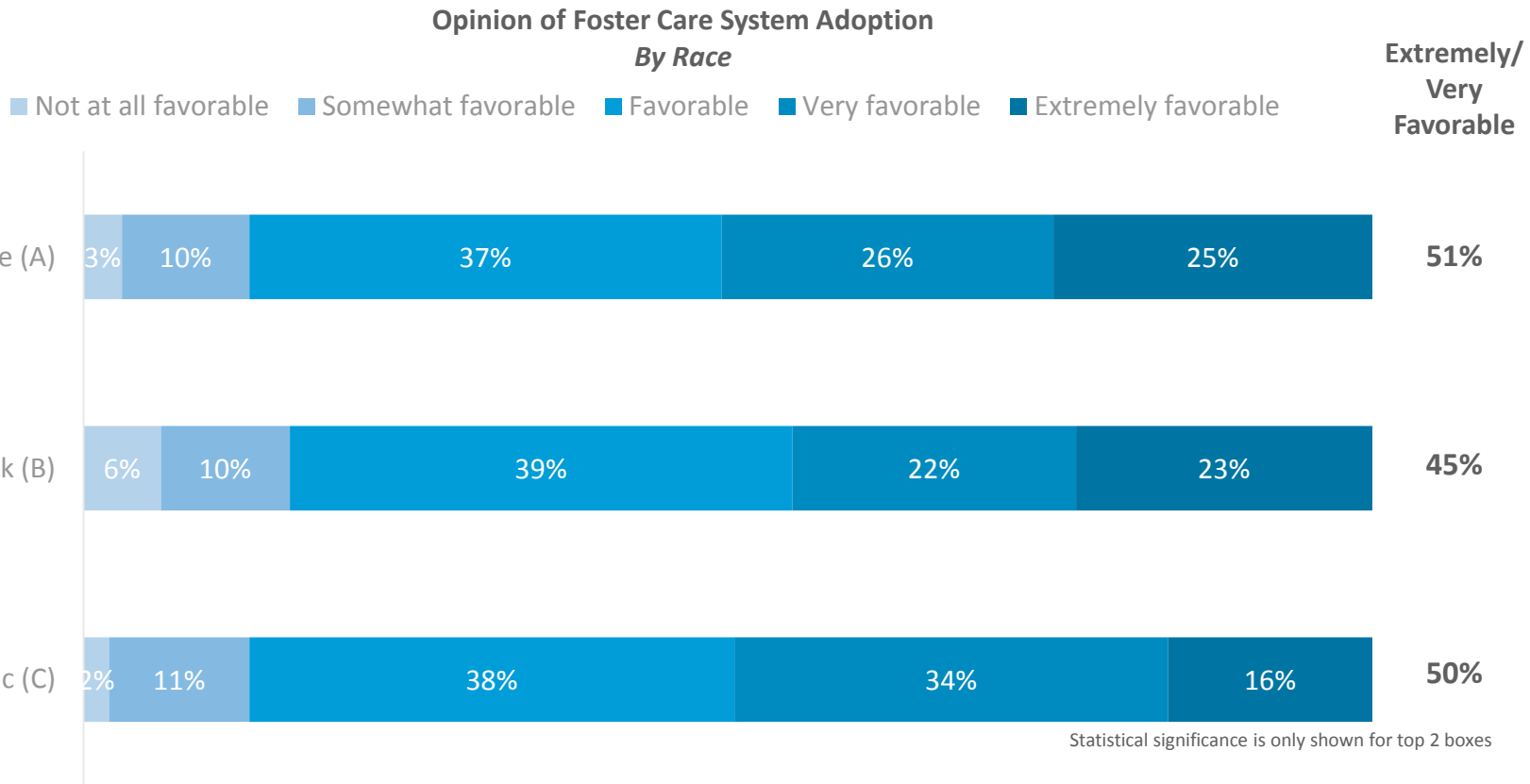


Base: All qualified respondents. (White n=1039, Black n=267, Hispanic n=289)  
Q806. In general, what is your opinion of private infant adoption?

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# OPINION OF FOSTER CARE ADOPTION BY RACE

All races are equally likely to have highly favorable opinions towards foster care adoption.



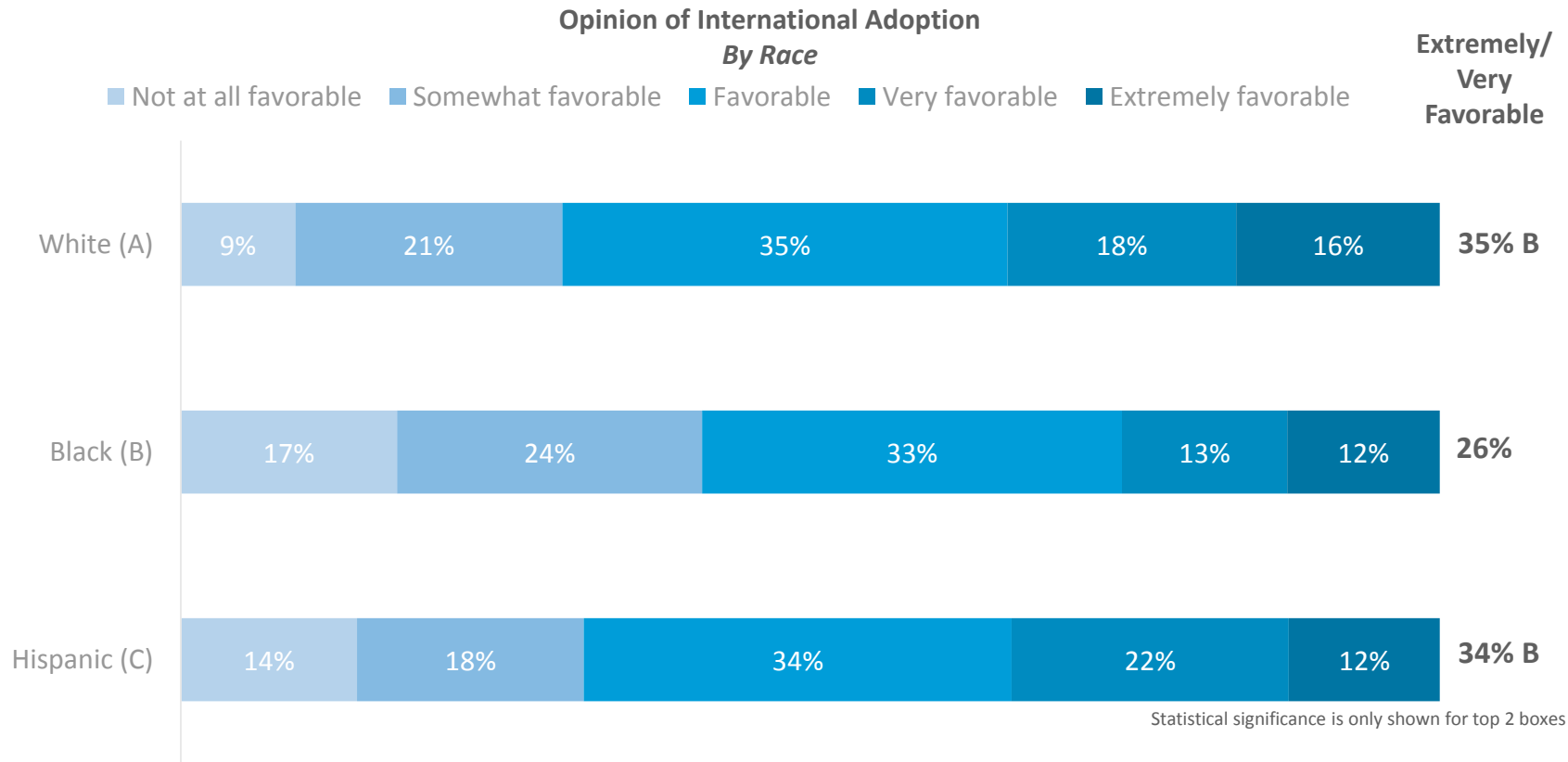
Base: All qualified respondents. (White n=1039, Black n=267, Hispanic n=289)

Q806. In general, what is your opinion of adoption of a child from the foster care system?

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# OPINION OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION BY RACE

Compared to Blacks, Whites and Hispanics are significantly more likely to have a highly favorable opinion of international adoption.



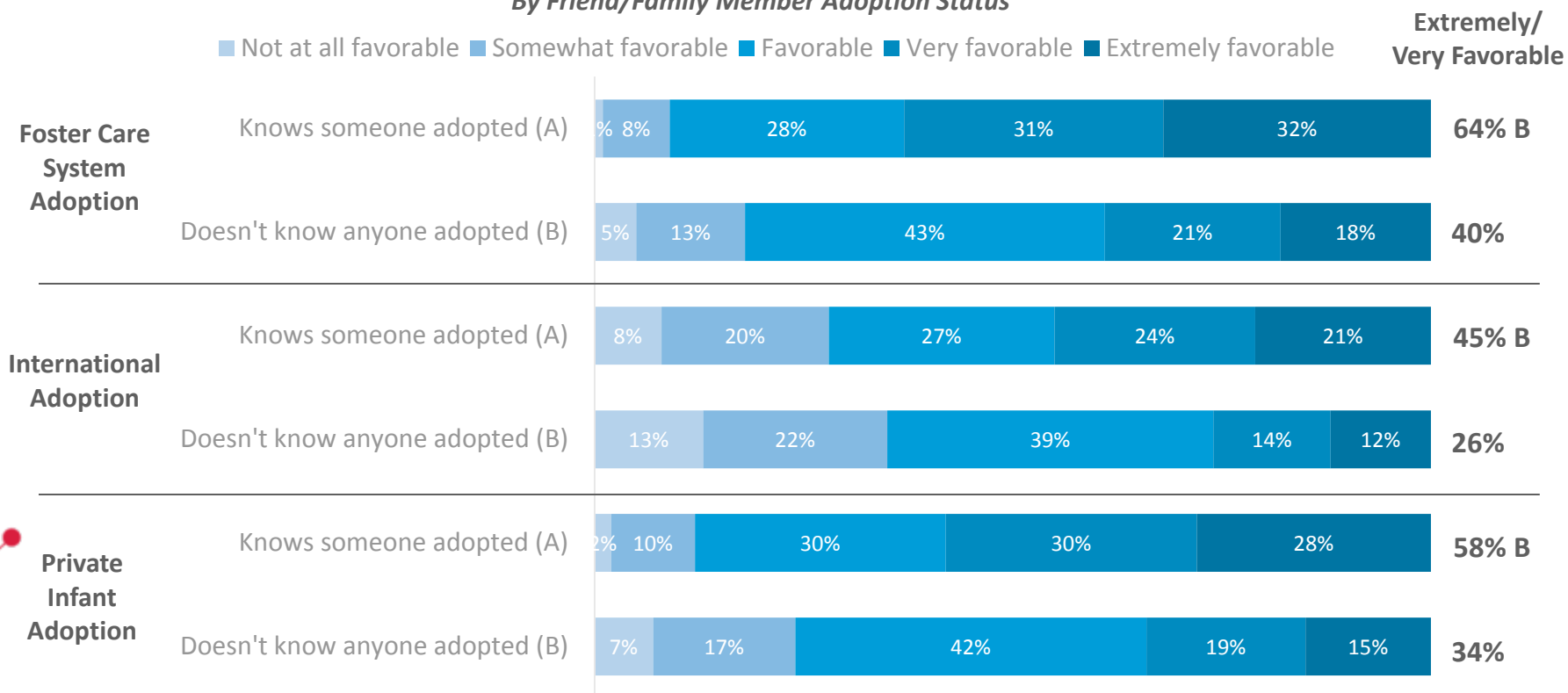
Base: All qualified respondents. (White =1039, Black n=267, Hispanic =289)  
 Q806. In general, what is your opinion of international adoption?

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# OPINION OF TYPES OF ADOPTION BY FAMILY/FRIEND ADOPTION EXPERIENCE

Those who know someone who has been adopted are significantly more likely to feel extremely/very favorable towards all types of adoption.

**Opinion of Specific Types of Adoption  
By Friend/Family Member Adoption Status**



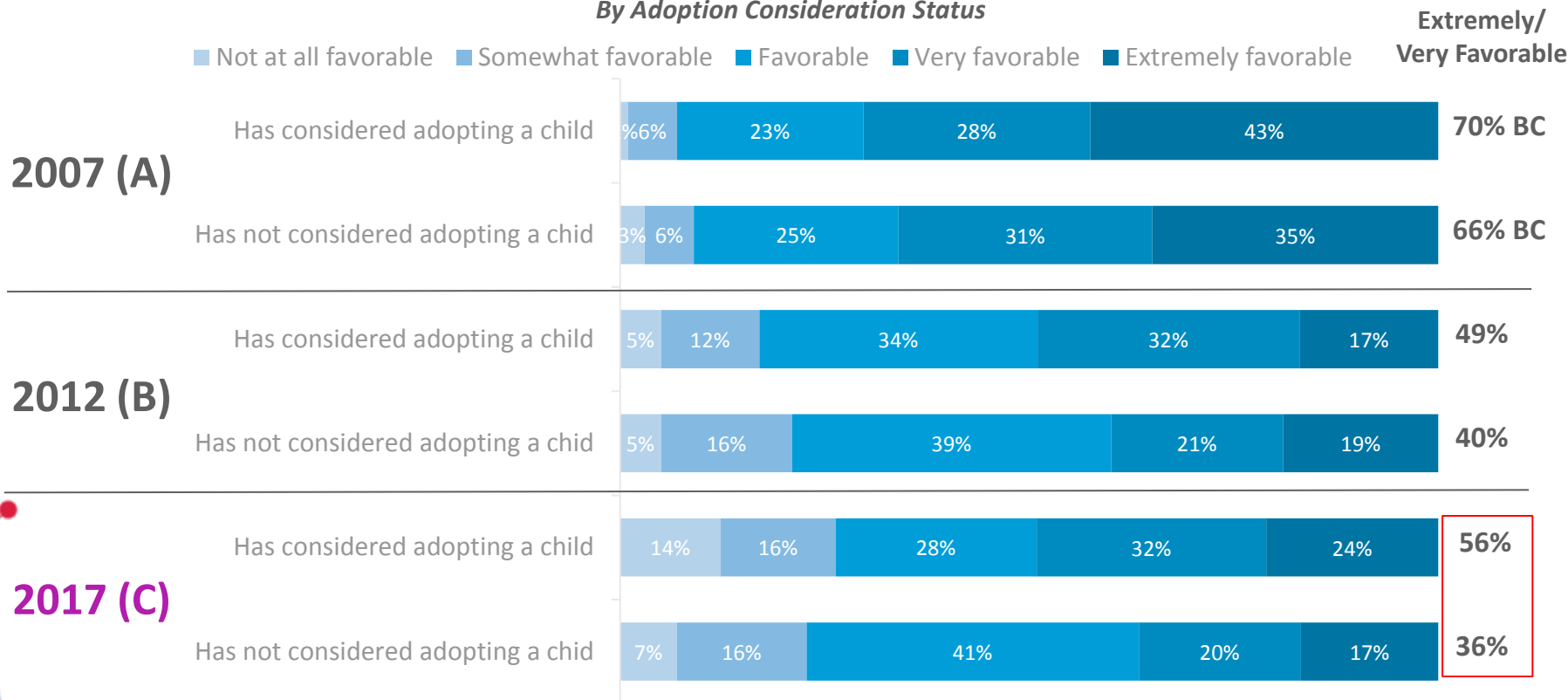
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

Base: All qualified respondents, Family/Friend Adopted (n=577), Family/Friend Not Adopted (n=858)  
Q806. In general, what is your opinion of adoption?

# OPINION OF PRIVATE INFANT ADOPTION BY POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

Those who have considered adopting are more likely to have a highly favorable opinion of private adoption compared to those who haven't considered. Favorability among both groups has declined since 2007.

Opinion of Private Infant Opinion  
By Adoption Consideration Status



Base: All qualified respondents, Yes (2007 n=460, 2012 n=331; 2017 n=357), No 2007 n=1094, 2012 n=1017; 2017 n=968)

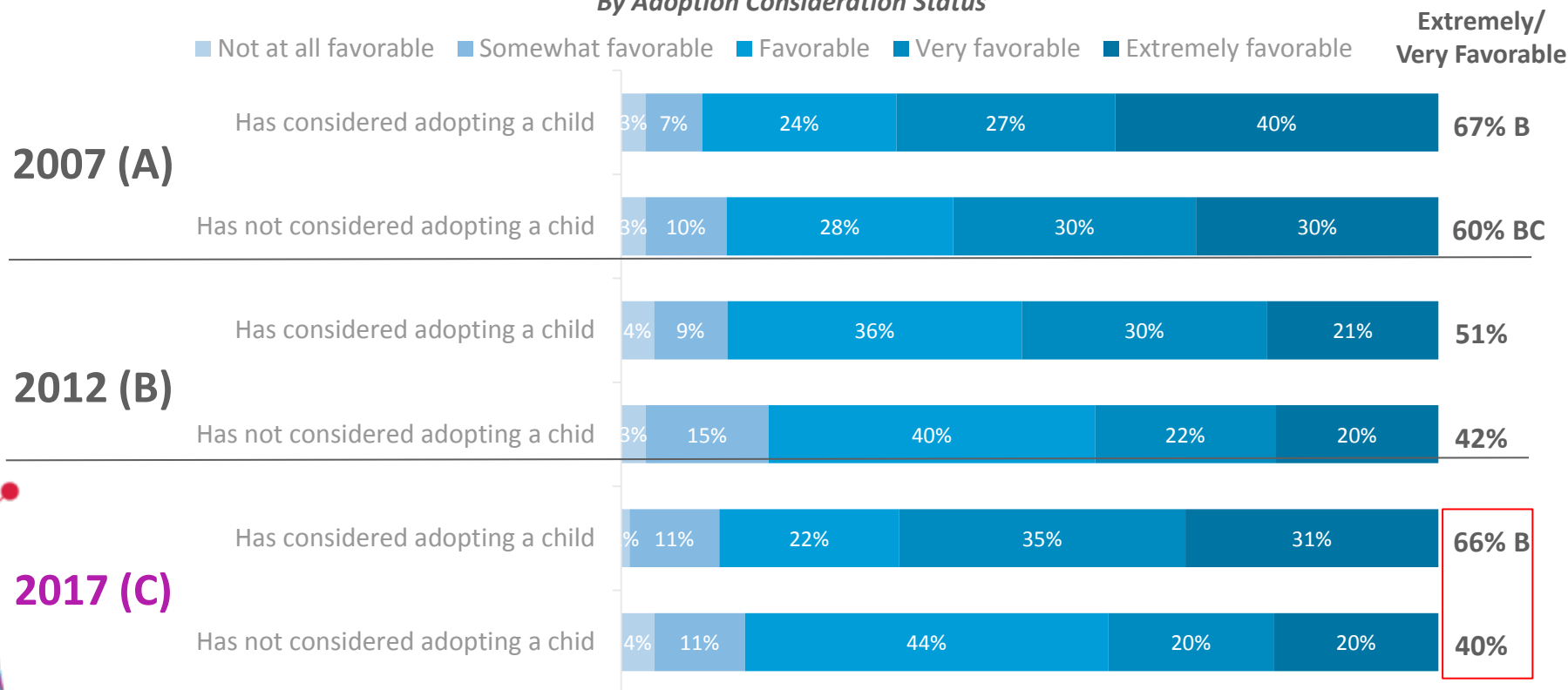
Q805. In general, what is your opinion of US private infant adoption/adoption of a child from the foster care system/international adoption?

Indicates significant difference between subgroups; Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

# OPINION OF FOSTER CARE ADOPTION BY POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

Those who have considered adopting are more likely to have a highly favorable opinion of foster care adoption compared to those who haven't considered. Favorability among those considering adoption has increased significantly since 2012.

Opinion of Foster Care System Adoption  
By Adoption Consideration Status



Indicates significant difference between subgroups; Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

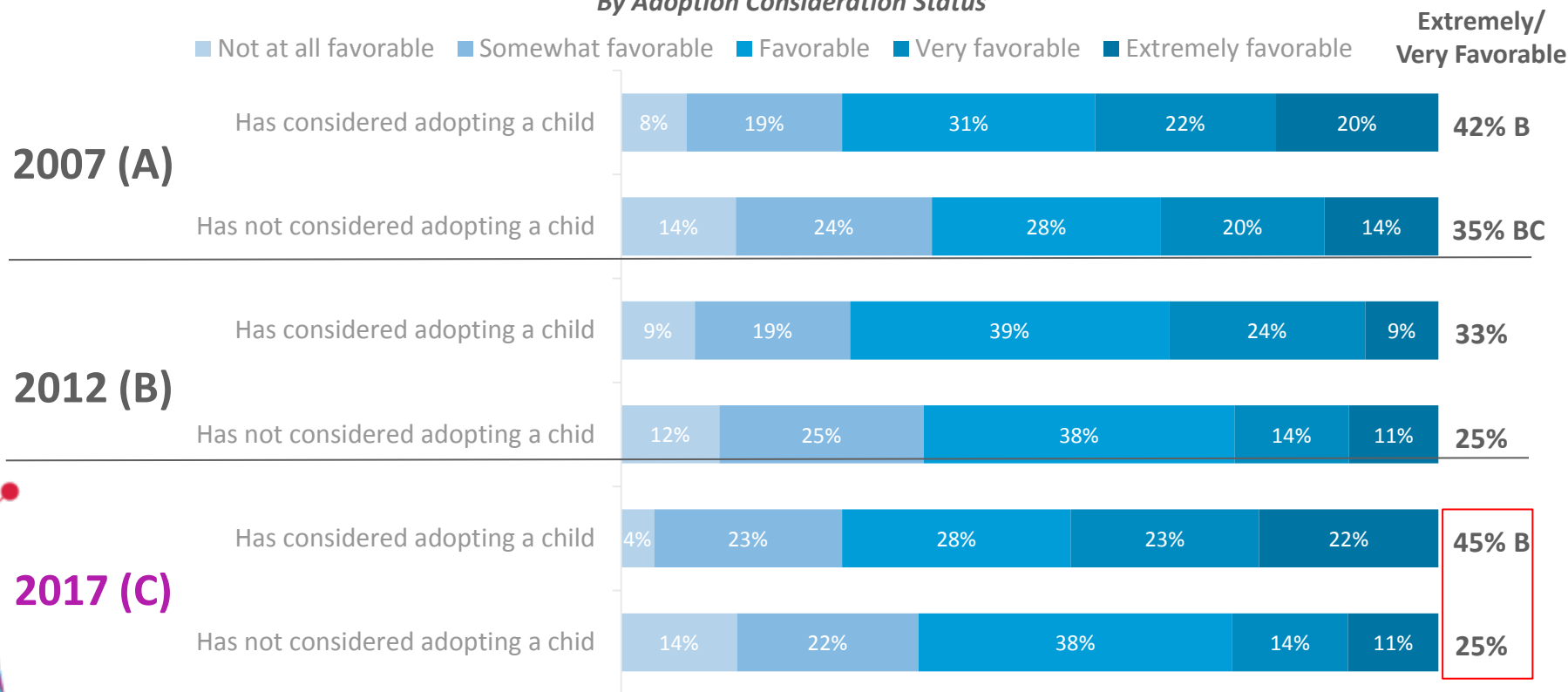
Base: All qualified respondents, Yes (2007 n=460, 2012 n=331; 2017 n=357), No 2007 n=1094, 2012 n=1017; 2017 n=968)

Q805. In general, what is your opinion of US private infant adoption/adoption of a child from the foster care system/international adoption?

# OPINION OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION BY POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

Those who have considered adopting are more likely to have a highly favorable opinion of international adoption compared to those who haven't considered. Favorability among those considering adoption has increased significantly since 2012.

Opinion of International Adoption  
By Adoption Consideration Status



Indicates significant difference between subgroups; Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

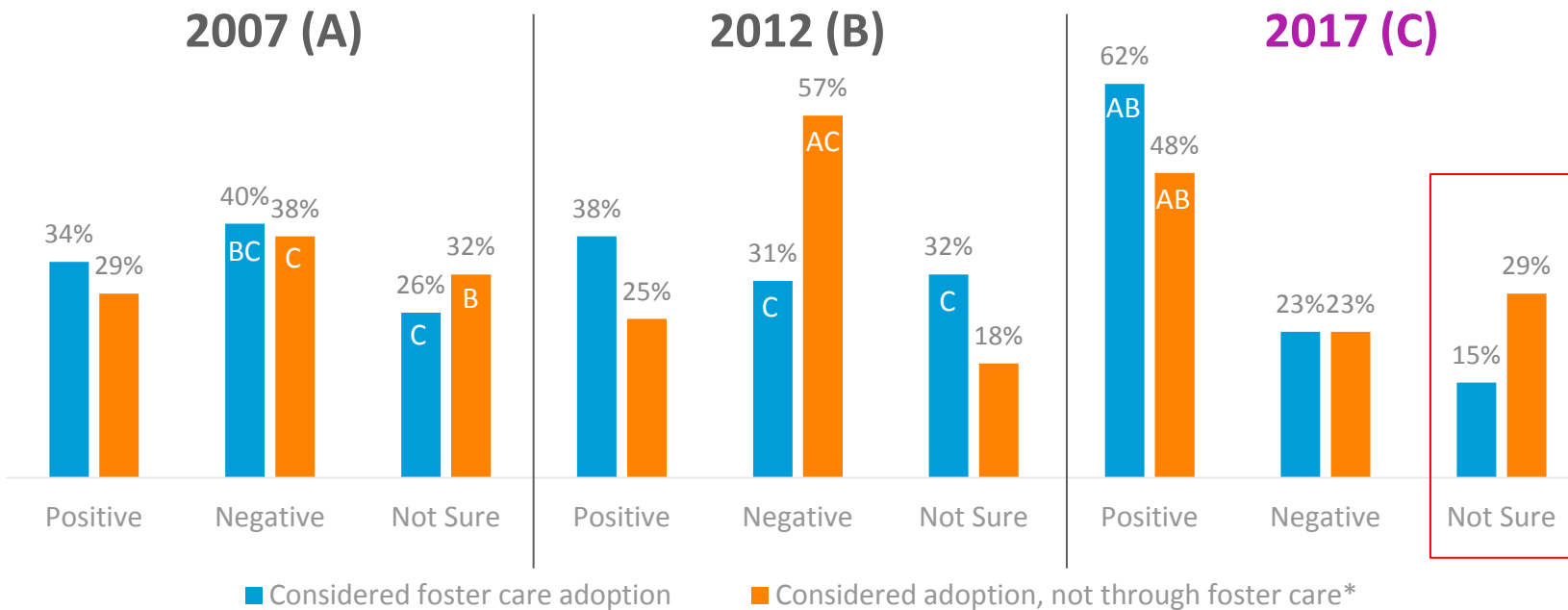
Base: All qualified respondents, Yes (2007 n=460, 2012 n=331; 2017 n=357), No 2007 n=1094, 2012 n=1017; 2017 n=968)

Q805. In general, what is your opinion of US private infant adoption/adoption of a child from the foster care system/international adoption?

# OPINION OF FOSTER CARE SYSTEM AMONG THOSE CONSIDERING FOSTER CARE ADOPTION

Those who have considered foster care adoption are significantly more likely than those who haven't to have a positive opinion of the foster care system. However, the percentage of those with a negative opinion who haven't considered foster care adoption has dropped considerably since 2012.

Opinion of Foster Care System  
By Consideration of Foster Care Adoption



Indicates significant differences between subgroups

All qualified respondents (Considered foster care adoption (2007 n=320; 2012 n=230; 2017 n=279); Considered adoption, not through foster care (2007 n=140; 2012 n=95\*; 2017 n=76\*))

Q911. In general, would you say you have a positive or negative opinion of the foster care system?

\*Note: small base sizes (less than 100)

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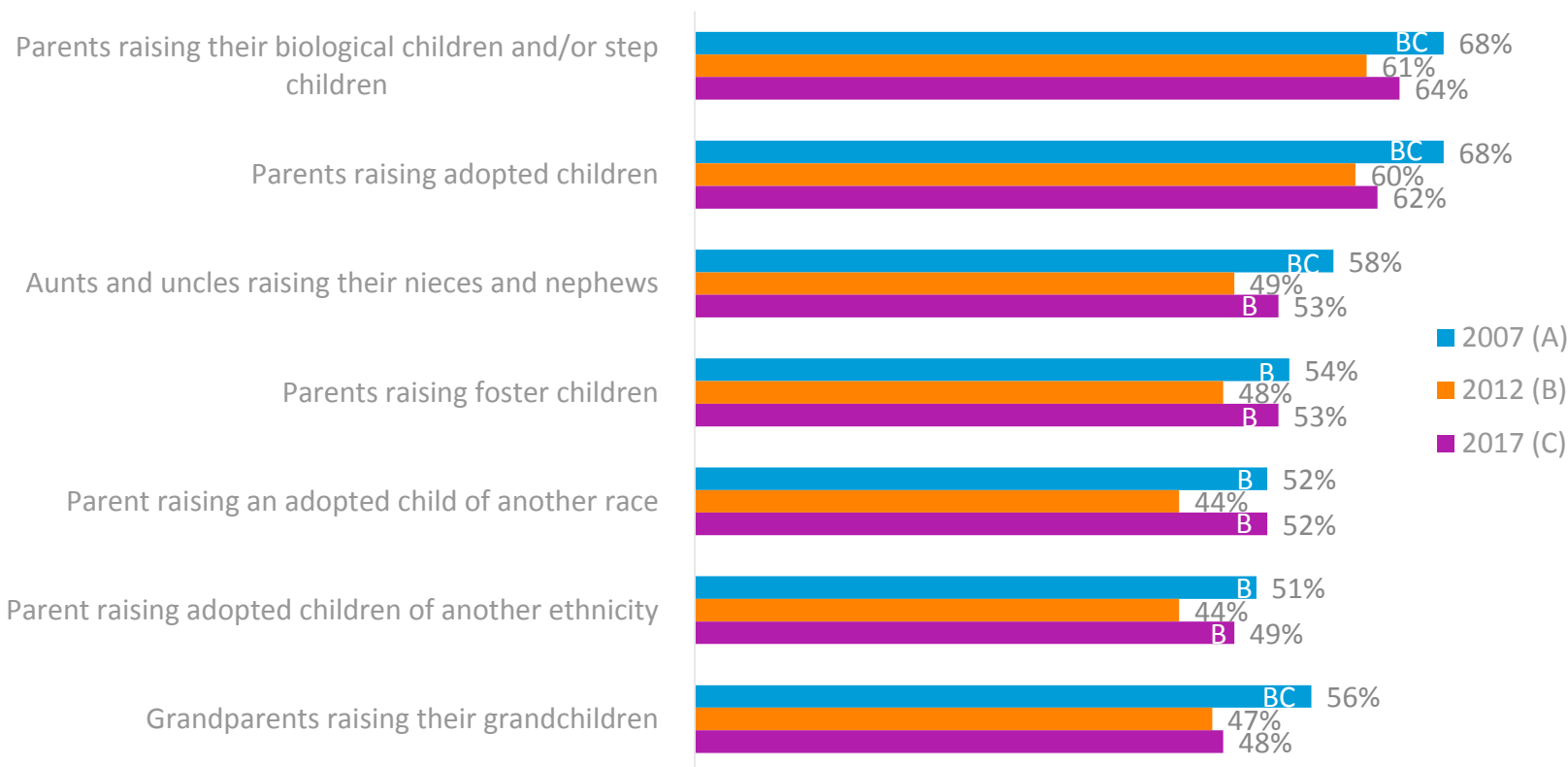


# EVALUATION OF HEALTHY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN

# PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTHY AND LOVING LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Perceptions that parents are providing a healthy and loving environment for raising foster children, those of another race, and those of another ethnicity have increased since 2012, as have perceptions for aunts and uncles raising their nieces and nephews.

**Healthy and Loving Living Arrangements – Top 7  
(% Definitely Provides a Healthy and Loving Environment)**



Base: All qualified respondents: Definitely can provide a healthy and loving environment (2007 n=1660, 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

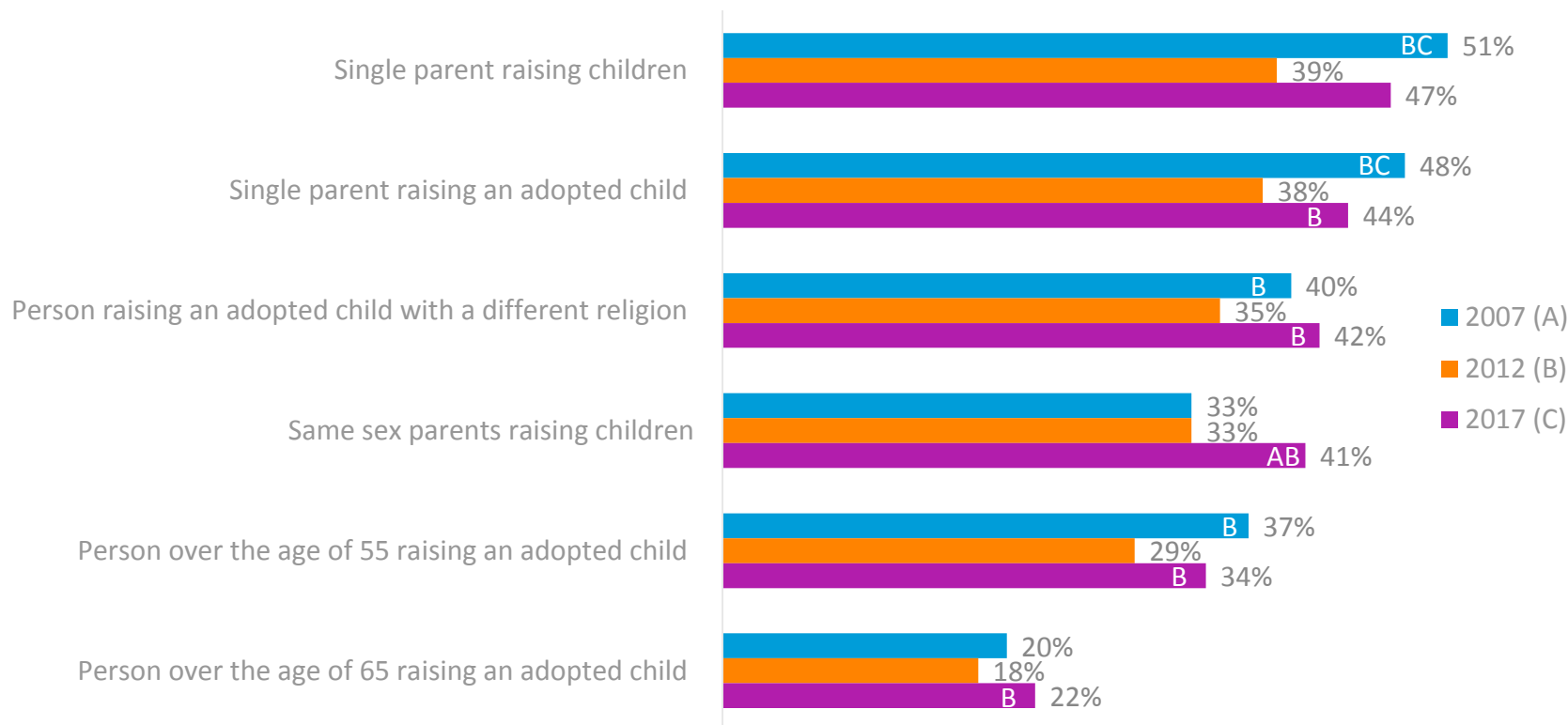
Q795. Do you believe that the following living arrangements can provide a healthy and loving environment for children? [ONLY "DEFINITELY CAN" SHOWN]

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# PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTHY AND LOVING LIVING ARRANGEMENTS (CONTINUED)

Compared to past years, Americans are more likely to feel that same sex parents raising children can provide a healthy and loving environment for children.

**Healthy and Loving Living Arrangements – Bottom 6  
(% Definitely Provides a Healthy and Loving Environment)**



Base: All qualified respondents: Definitely can provide a healthy and loving environment (2007 n=1660, 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q795. Do you believe that the following living arrangements can provide a healthy and loving environment for children? [ONLY "DEFINITELY CAN" SHOWN]

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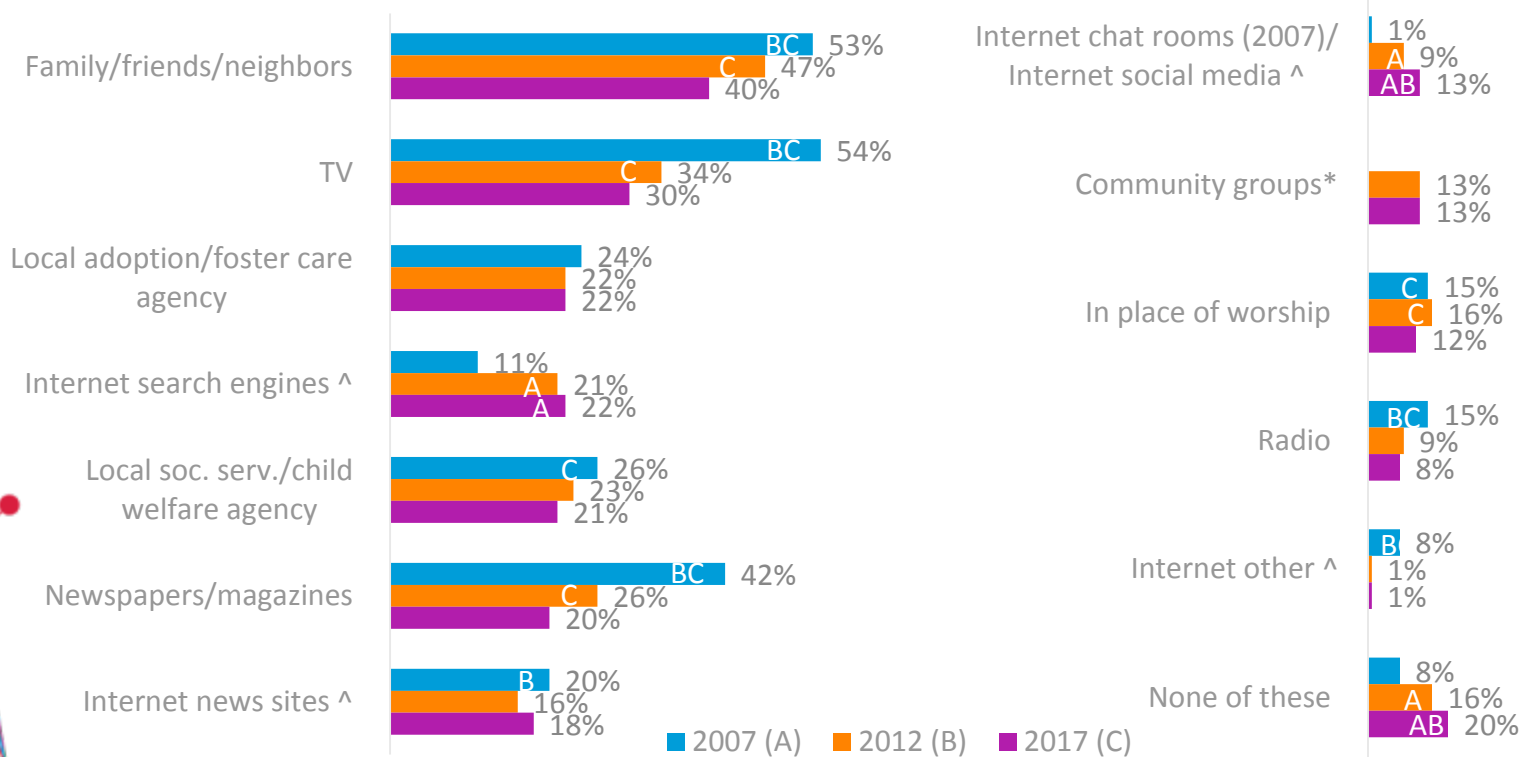
# ADOPTION INFORMATION SOURCES

# ADOPTION INFORMATION SOURCES

Friends and family, TV, and newspapers/magazines still top the list of adoption information resources, though they are declining. Social media is increasing, though is still relatively low. However, a growing number of Americans haven't received information from any of these sources.

^Internet (Net) 2017: 36%

Sources of Adoption Information



Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660, 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q810. What are your main sources of information about adoption? Please select all that apply.

\*not asked in 2007



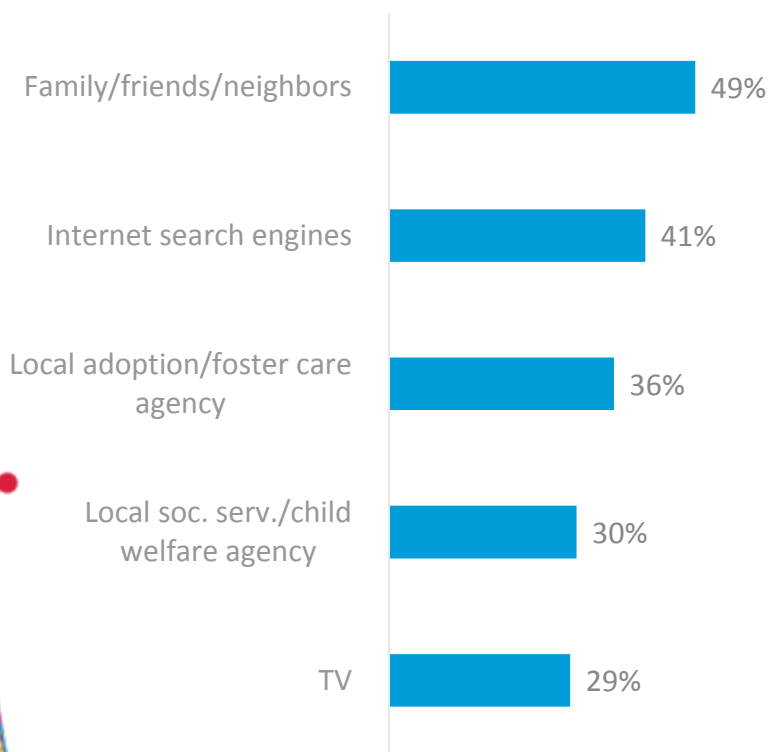
Finding Forever Families for Children in Foster Care

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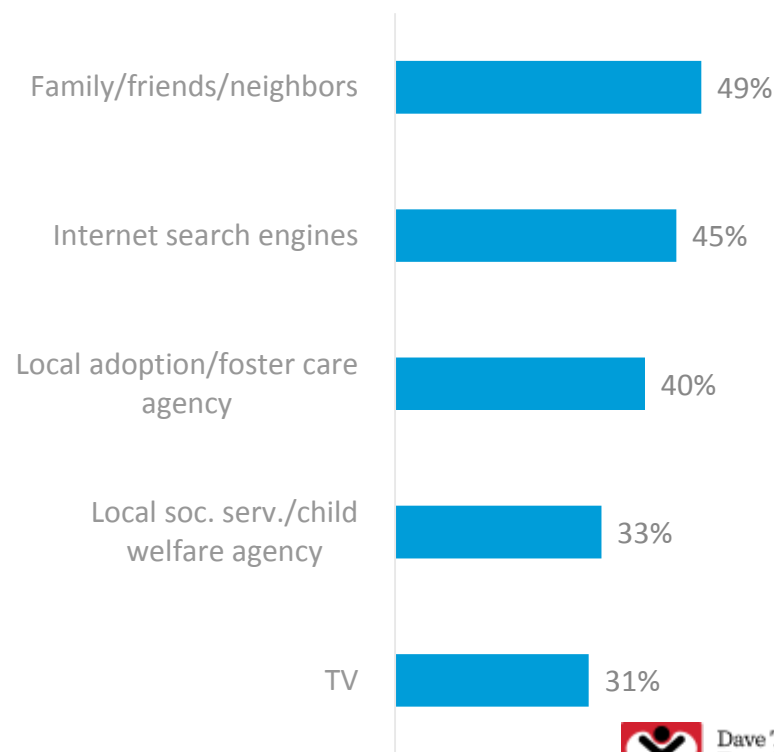
# ADOPTION INFORMATION SOURCES

Those considering adoption in general and those specifically considering foster care adoption have the same top sources of information: family/friends neighbors, Internet search engines, and local adoption agencies.

**Top 5 Sources of Adoption Information  
By Considering adoption**



**Top 5 Sources of Adoption Information  
By Considering foster care adoption**



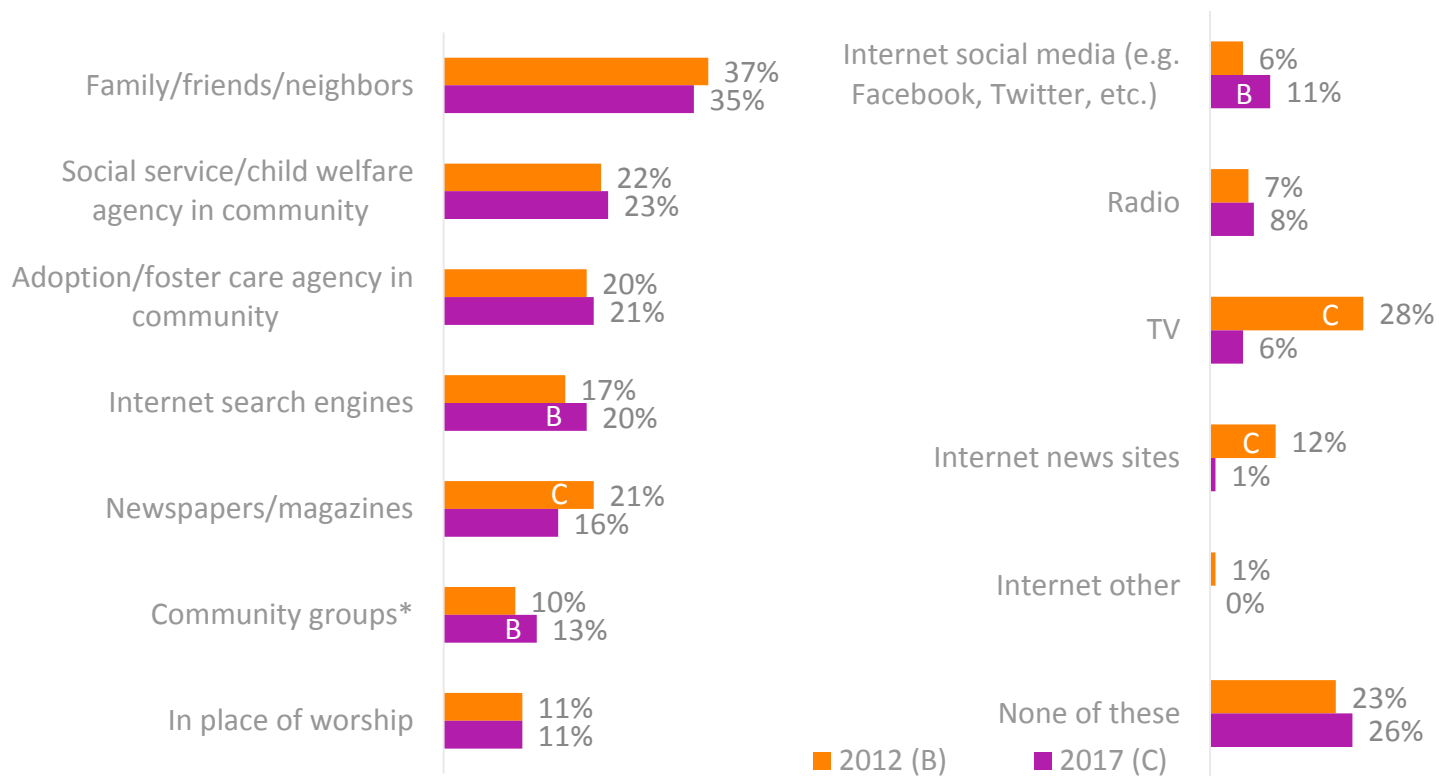
Base: All qualified respondents (Considering adoption n=357; Considering foster care adoption n=279)  
Q810. What are your main sources of information about adoption? Please select all that apply.

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# FOSTER CARE ADOPTION INFORMATION SOURCES

Personal and community connections are the top sources of foster care adoption information, but Internet search engines rise to the top as well. TV has dropped significantly as a main source since 2012. However, over 1 in 4 Americans cite no sources whatsoever.

Sources of Foster Care Adoption Information



Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660, 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q820. Where do you obtain information about foster care adoption? Please select all that apply.

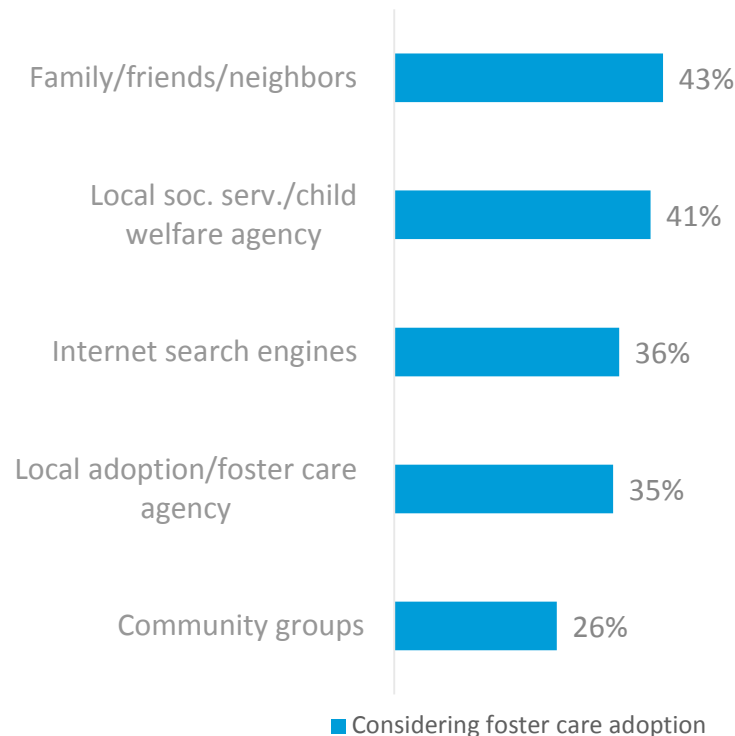
\*not asked in 2007

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# FOSTER CARE ADOPTION INFORMATION SOURCES

Those considering foster care adoption are making heavy use of the Internet, even beyond their personal network, to learn about foster care adoption.

**Top 5 Sources of Foster Care Information  
By Considering foster care adoption**



Base: All qualified respondents (Considering foster care adoption n=279)

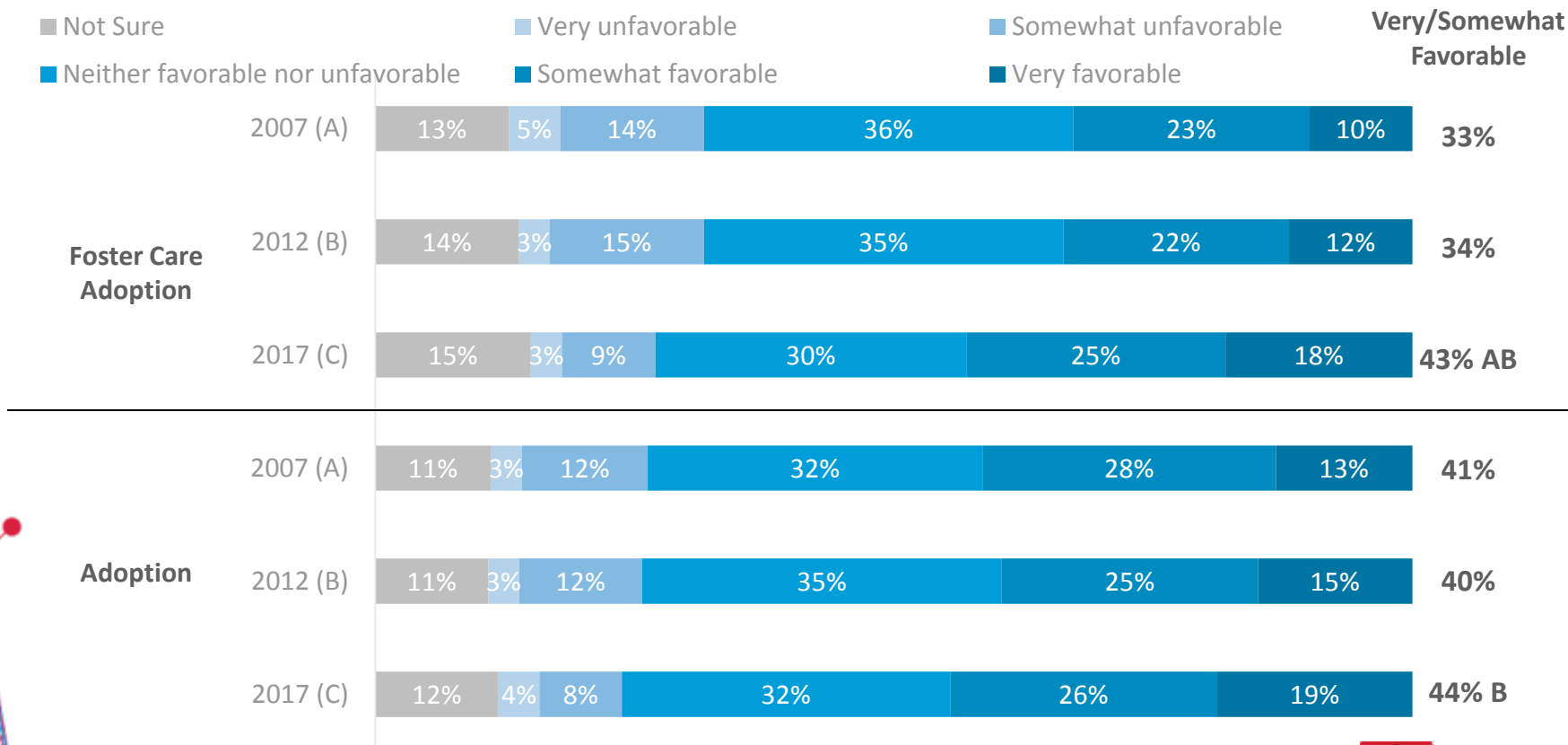
Q820. Where do you obtain information about foster care adoption? Please select all that apply.



# PERCEPTIONS OF MEDIA COVERAGE

The perception of media coverage on foster care adoption as favorable is significantly higher than in previous years.

Perceptions of Media Coverage of Adoption



Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660, 2012 n=1428, 2017 n=1448)

Q825. In general, would you say that media coverage of adoption is...?

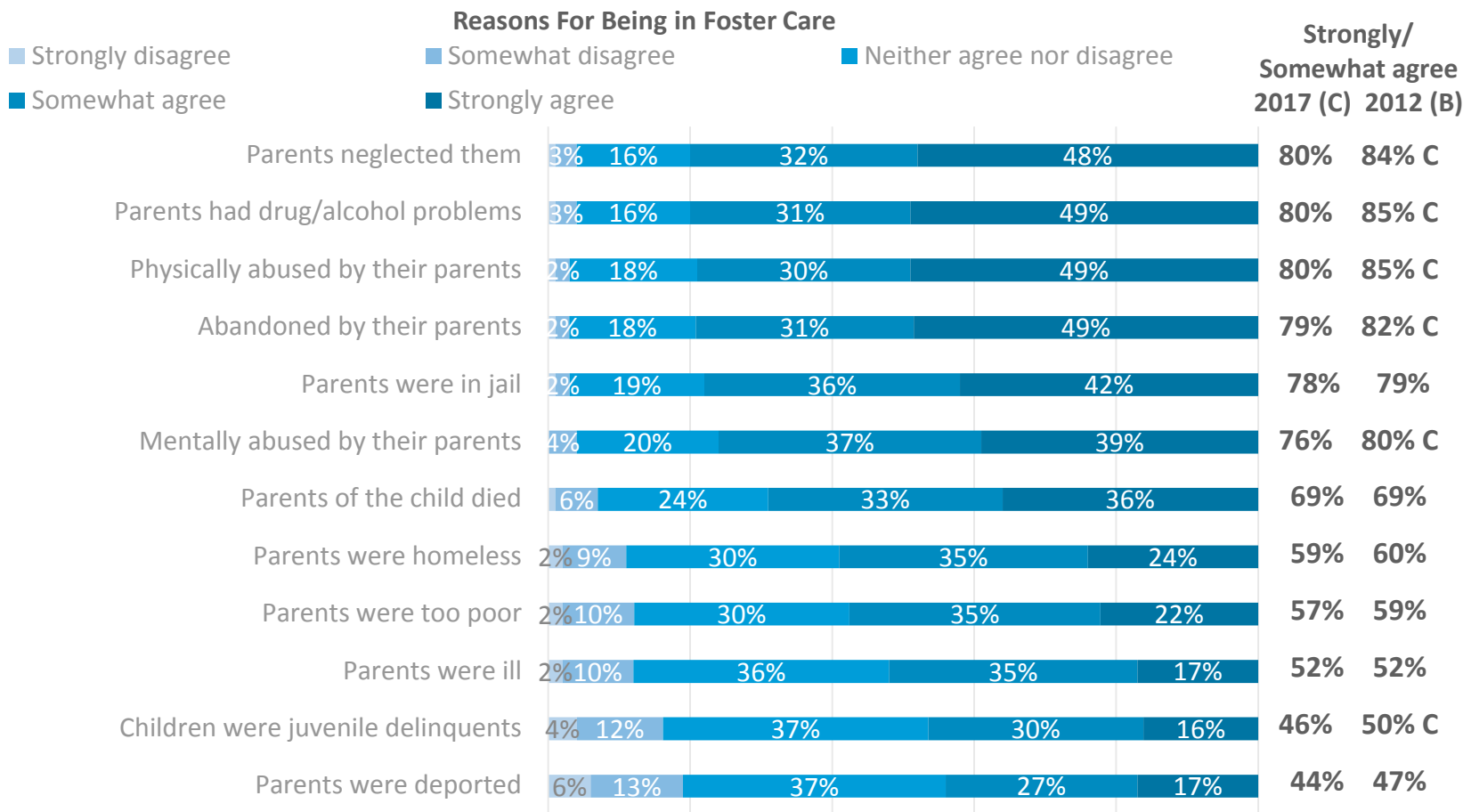
Q830. Would you say that media coverage of foster care adoption is...?

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# PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS IN ADOPTED CHILDREN

# REASONS FOR BEING IN FOSTER CARE

A majority of Americans see foster care children as being placed in care after suffering pain and tragedy. Several of the top reasons have decreased since 2012.



Base: All qualified respondents (2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

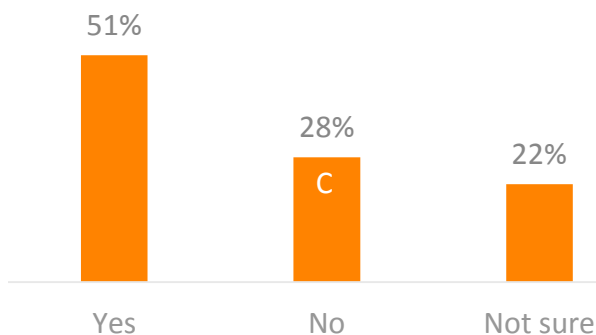
Q903. There are a number of reasons why children might be placed in foster care in your community today. Please indicate your level of agreement with each reason.

# ADOPTABILITY

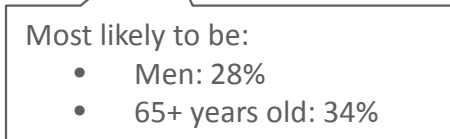
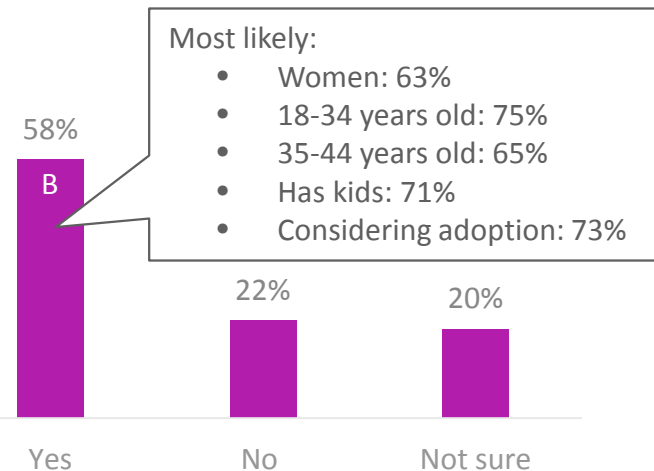
Nearly 6 in 10 Americans believe that every child is adoptable, significantly more than in 2012. However, this still leaves over 40% of adults who either believe that every child is not adoptable or they are unsure.

Belief of Adoptability of Every Child

2012 (B)



2017 (C)

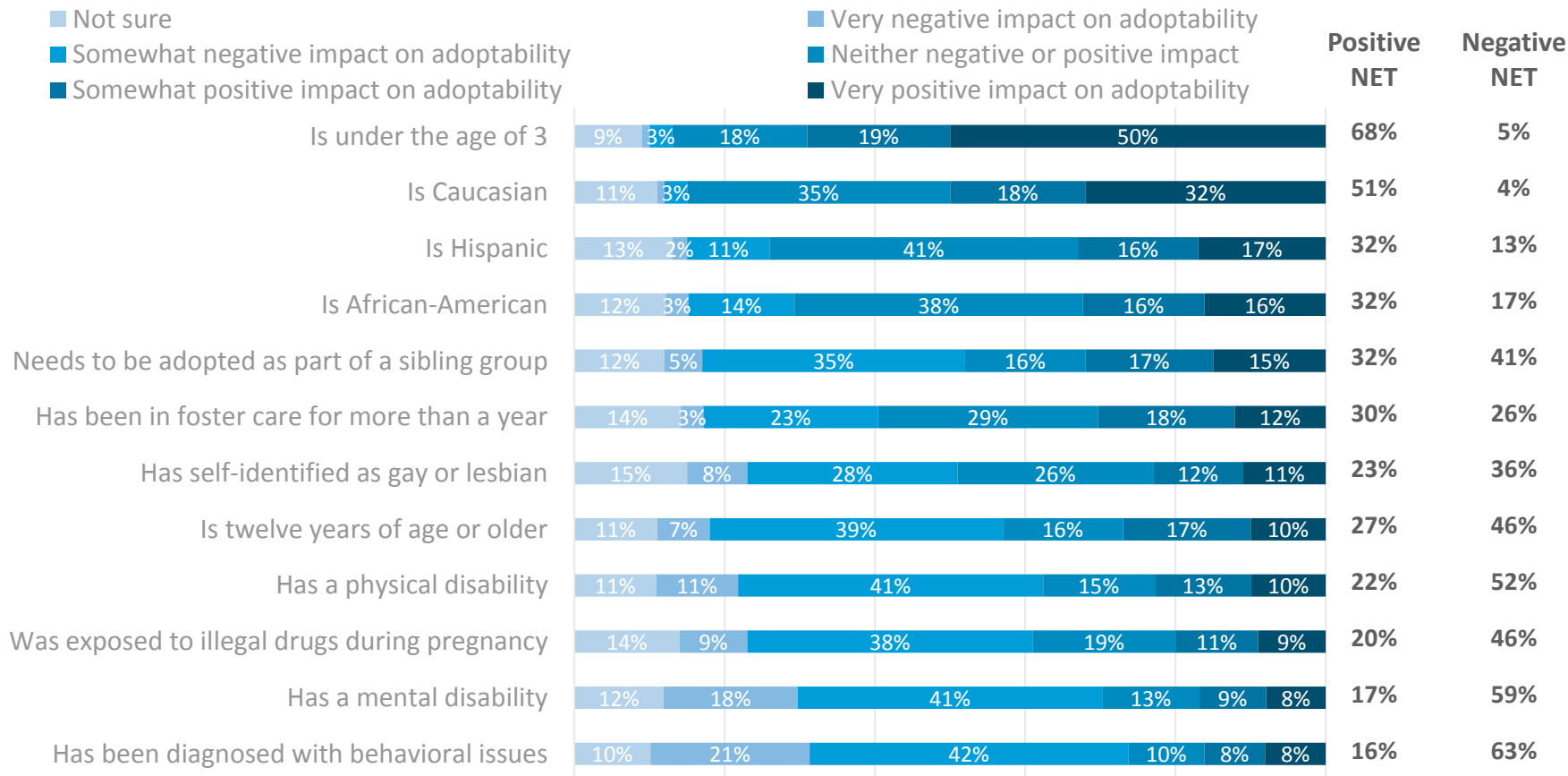


Base: All qualified respondents (2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)  
 Q796. Do you believe every child is adoptable?

# FACTORS IMPACTING ADOPTABILITY

Being young or Caucasian are seen as the most positive impacts on the likelihood of being adopted. Having behavioral issues or mental and physical disabilities are seen as having the most negative impacts.

Impact of Factors on Adoptability



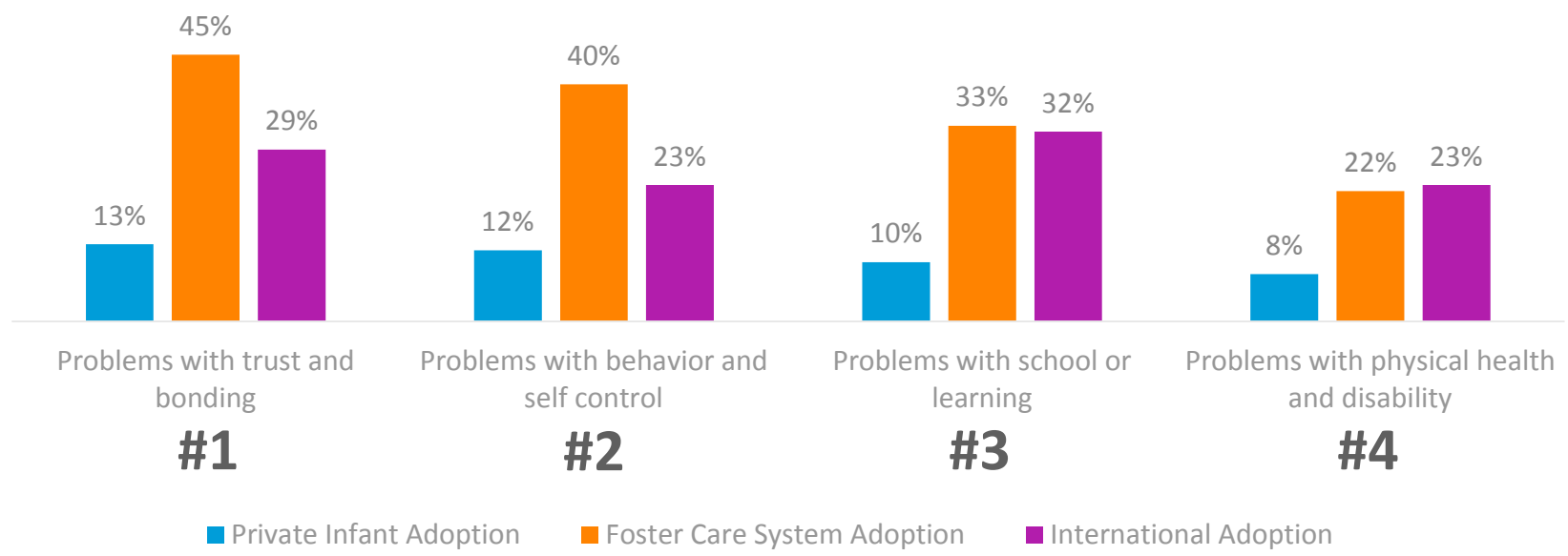
Base: All qualified respondents (n=1448)

Q798. Please indicate how much of an impact you feel the following has on a child's "adoptability", i.e., how likely they are to be adopted?

# PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS AMONG ADOPTED CHILDREN

Children adopted through foster care are seen as more likely to have a wide range of issues. The top concern for each type of adoption centers around the issue of trust and bonding.

Potential for Problems in Adopted Children  
(% saying child is more likely to have issue)



Base: All qualified respondents (n=1448)

Q865/Q870/Q875. In general, do you think children adopted through...are less, equally or more likely than other children to have...? (More likely)

# PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS AMONG ADOPTED CHILDREN

Perceptions that children adopted from foster care are more likely to have problems with trust, behavior, or school has significantly decreased over previous years.

Potential for Problems in Adopted Children  
(% saying child is more likely to have issue)

	Private Infant Adoption			Foster Care System Adoption			International Adoption		
	2007 (A)	2012 (B)	2017 (C)	2007 (A)	2012 (B)	2017 (C)	2007 (A)	2012 (B)	2017 (C)
Problems with trust and bonding	16% BC	12%	13%	64% BC	53% C	45%	35% C	32%	29%
Problems with behavior and self control	13% B	10%	12%	59% BC	46% C	40%	25%	23%	23%
Problems with school or learning	10% B	7%	10% B	49% BC	38% C	33%	35% B	30%	32%
Problems with physical health and disability	9% B	6%	8% B	34% BC	23%	22%	32% BC	23%	23%

Base: All qualified respondents (2007n=1660, 2012n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

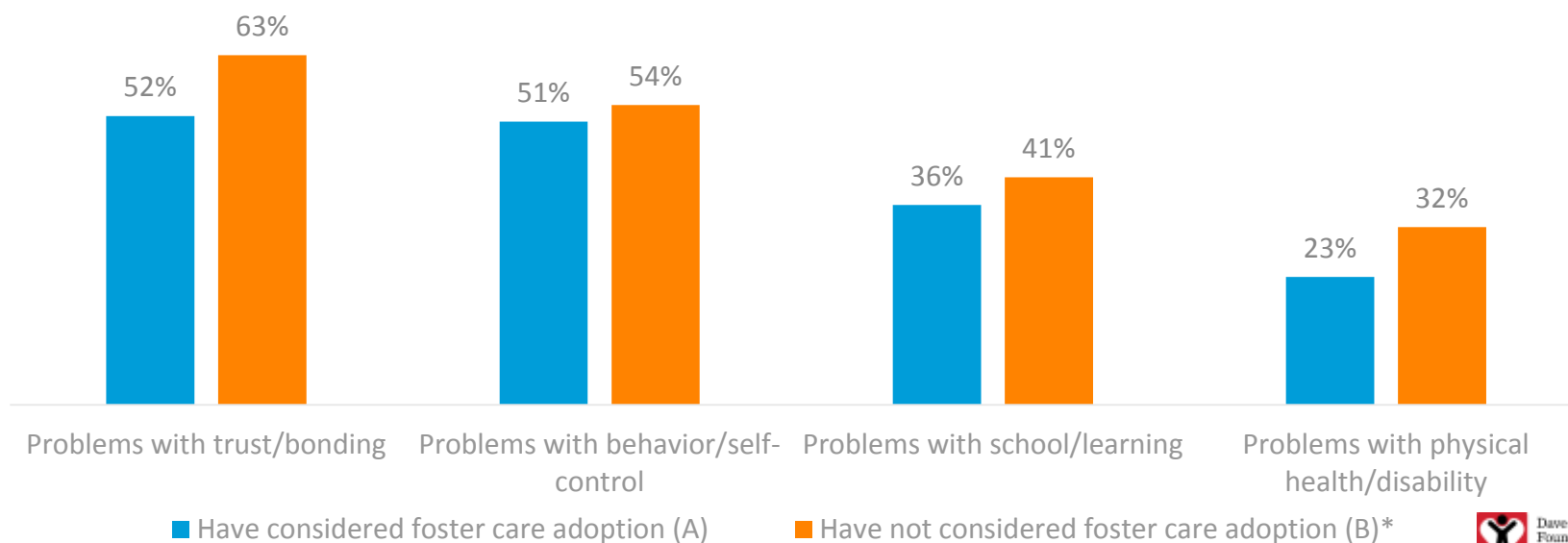
Q865/Q870/Q875. In general, do you think children adopted through...are less, equally or more likely than other children to have...? (MORE LIKELY)

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# PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS WITH ADOPTED CHILDREN - AMONG FOSTER CARE POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

Perceptions of problems with foster care children is not holding back people from consideration. Those who say they have considered foster care adoption are just as likely as those who have not to view foster care children as having an array of issues.

Potential for Problems in Adopted Children  
(% saying child is more likely to have issue)



Base: All qualified respondents (Respondent who have considered/have not considered adopting through foster care system (n=279/76\*))  
Q870. In general, do you think children adopted out of foster care are less, equally or more likely than other children to have...? (MORE LIKELY)

\*Note: small base size (less than 100)



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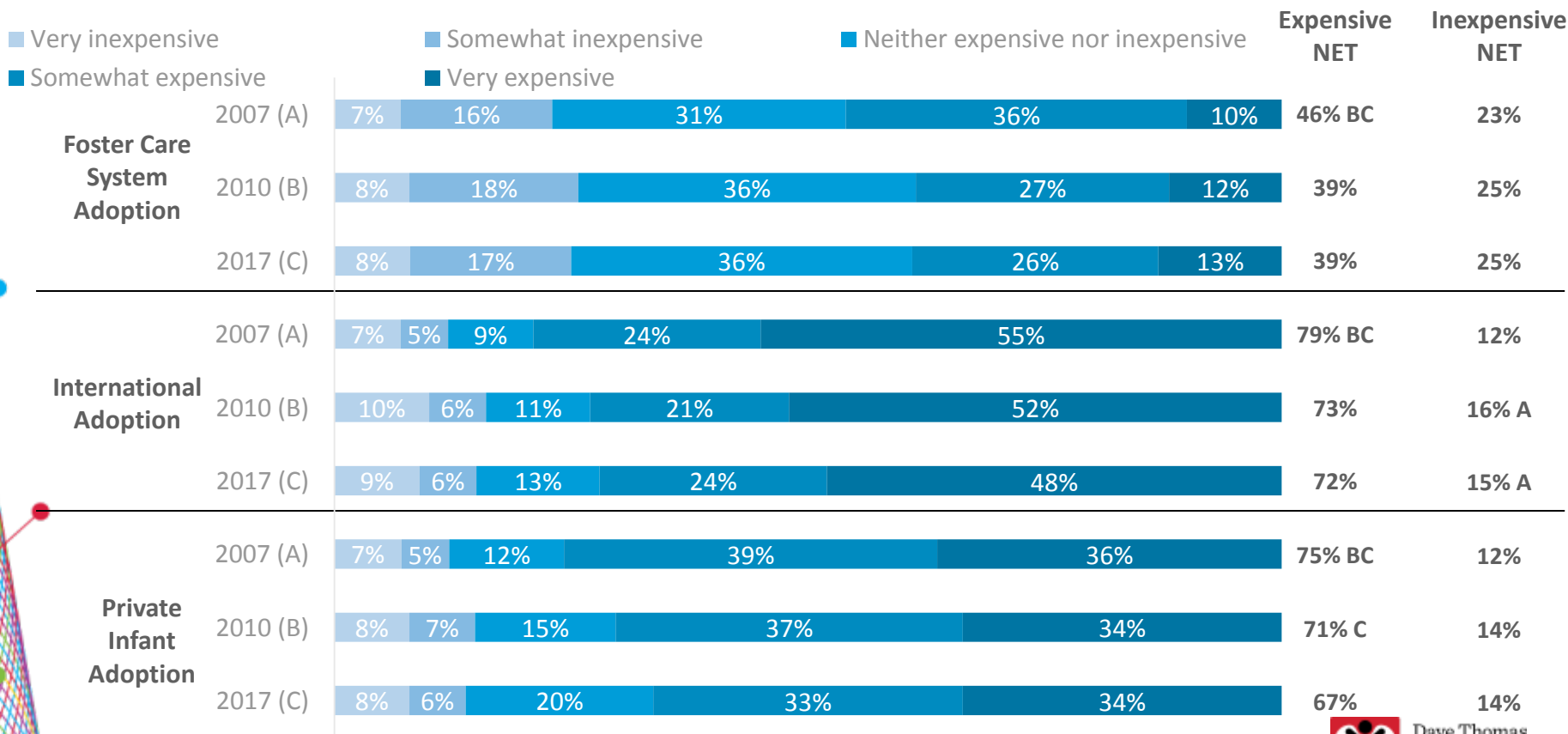


# PERCEIVED OBSTACLES TO ADOPTION

# PERCEPTIONS OF EXPENSE OF ADOPTION

All types of adoption are seen as less expensive than in 2007, with foster care adoption still far and away seen as the lowest cost option.

Perceived Expense of Each Type of Adoption



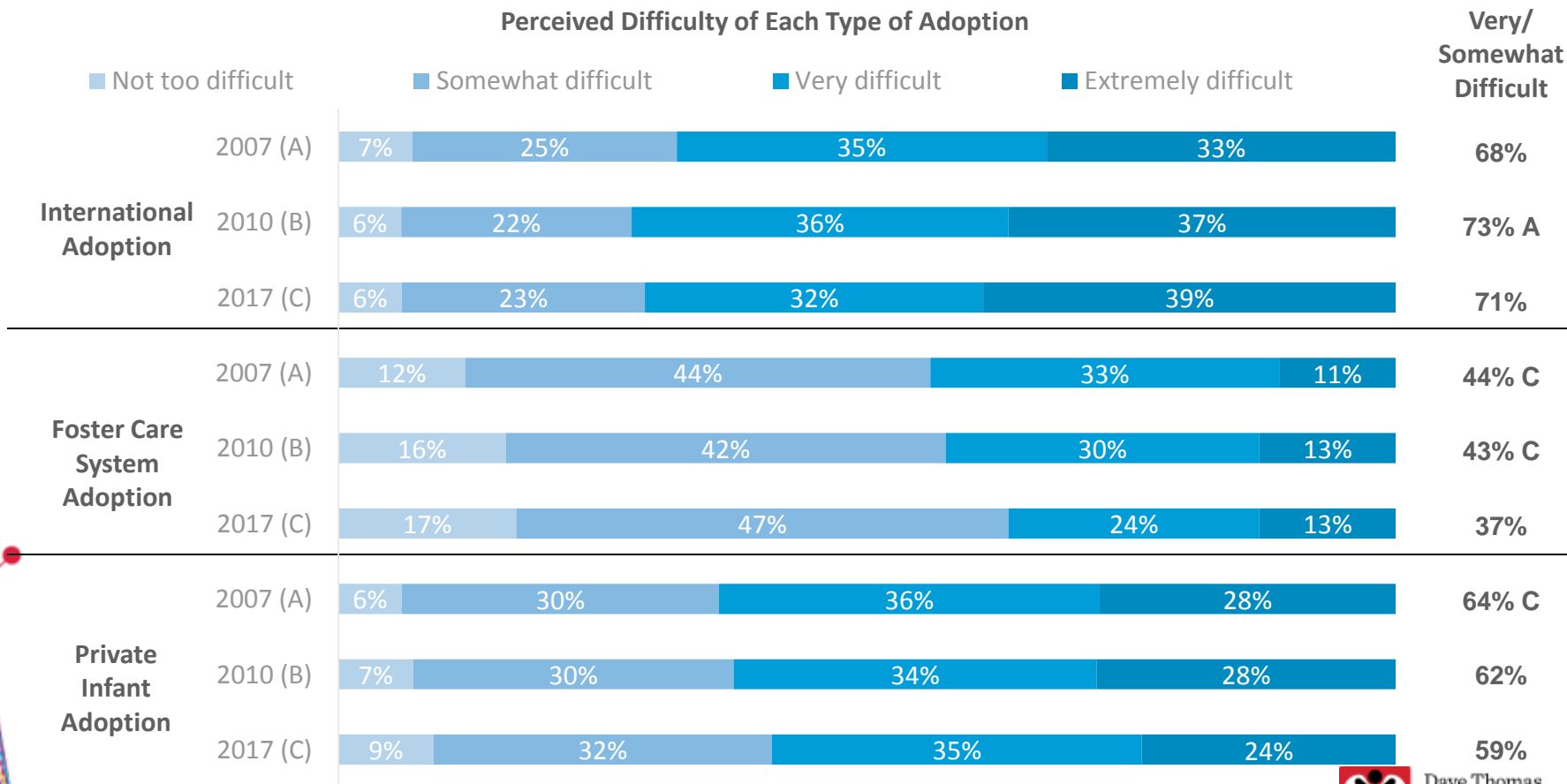
Base: All qualified respondents (2007n=1660, 2012n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q880. How expensive would you say that each type of adoption is, based on what you have read, heard or seen?

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# PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFICULTY OF ADOPTION

As with cost, the perceived level of difficulty of foster care adoption is far lower than that of international adoption and private infant adoption. Further, the difficulty level of foster care adoption has decreased since prior years.



Base: All qualified respondents (2007 n=1660, 2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

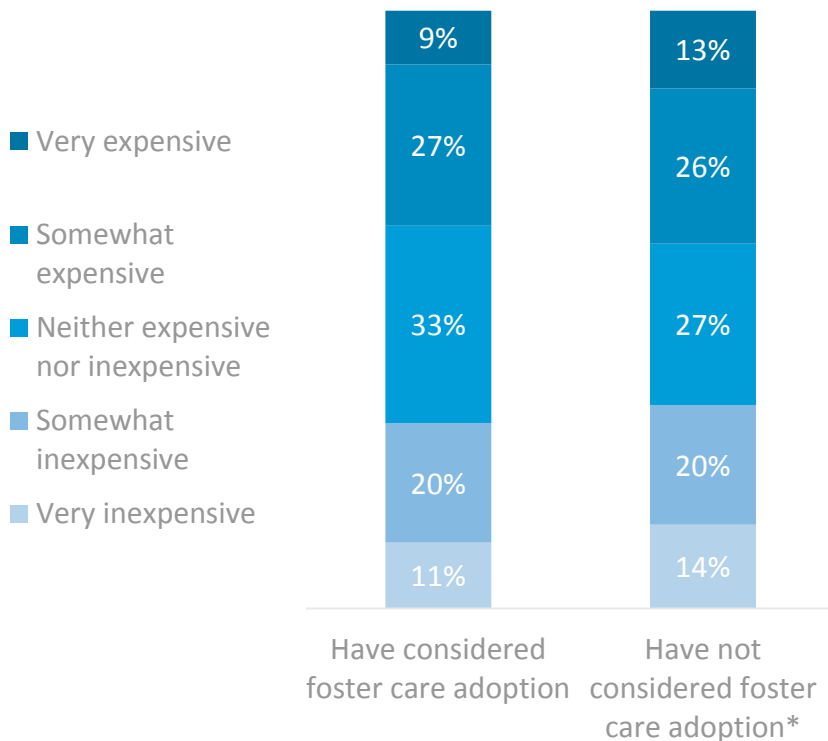
Q885.. Based on what you may have read, heard or seen, how difficult would you say that it is to complete the steps involved in adopting a child?

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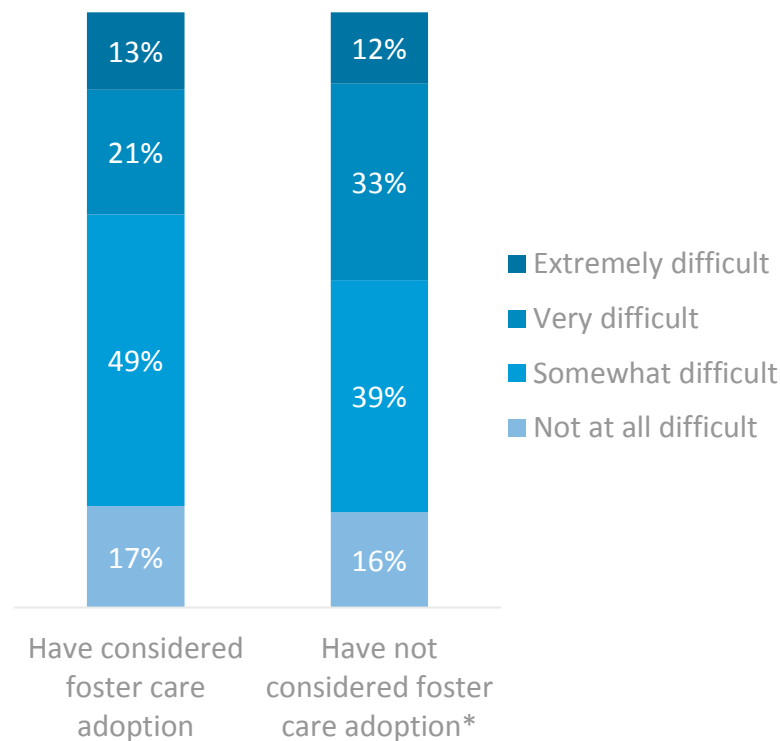
# PERCEPTION OF COST AND DIFFICULTY OF FOSTER CARE ADOPTION AMONG POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

Whether or not an adult is considering foster care adoption, perceptions of cost and difficulty are similar.

**Perceived Expense of Foster Care Adoption**  
*Base: Foster Care Adoption Consideration Status*



**Perceived Difficulty of Foster Care Adoption**  
*Base: Foster Care Adoption Consideration Status*



**Base: All Qualified Respondents (Have considered/have not considered foster care adoption (n=279/76\*))**

\*Note: small base size (less than 100)

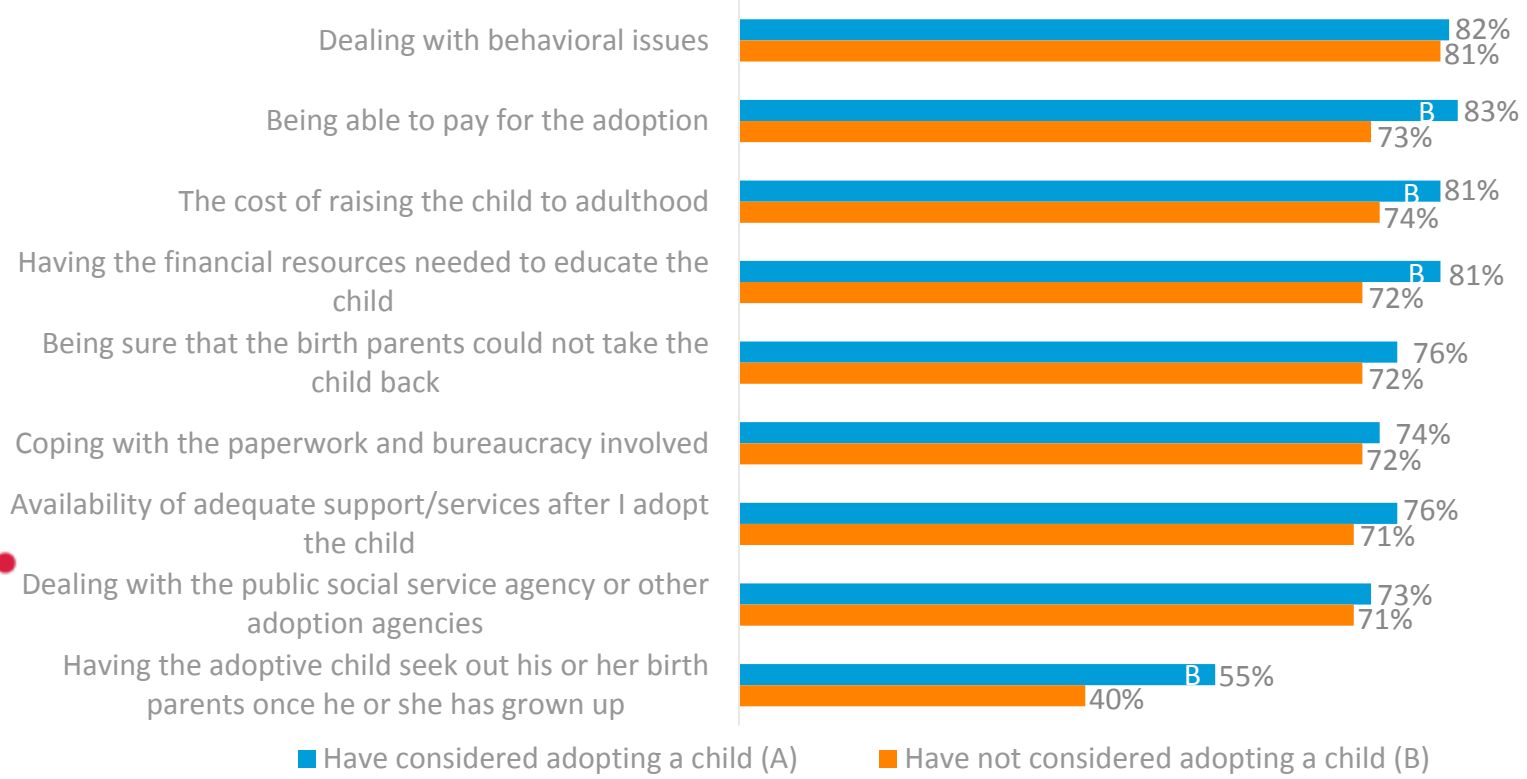
Q880. How expensive would you say that each type of adoption is, based on what you have read, heard or seen?

Q885. Based on what you may have read, heard or seen, how difficult would you say that it is to complete the steps involved in adopting a child?

# FOSTER CARE ADOPTION CONCERNS AMONG POTENTIAL ADOPTERS

Those who have considered adopting a child have significantly higher concerns about the financial implications of adopting a child from foster care, compared to those who have not.

**Concerns of Foster Care Adoption  
(% saying major/minor concern)  
By Adoption Consideration Status**



Base: All qualified respondents (Have considered adopting a child (n=357); Have not considered adopting a child (n=968))

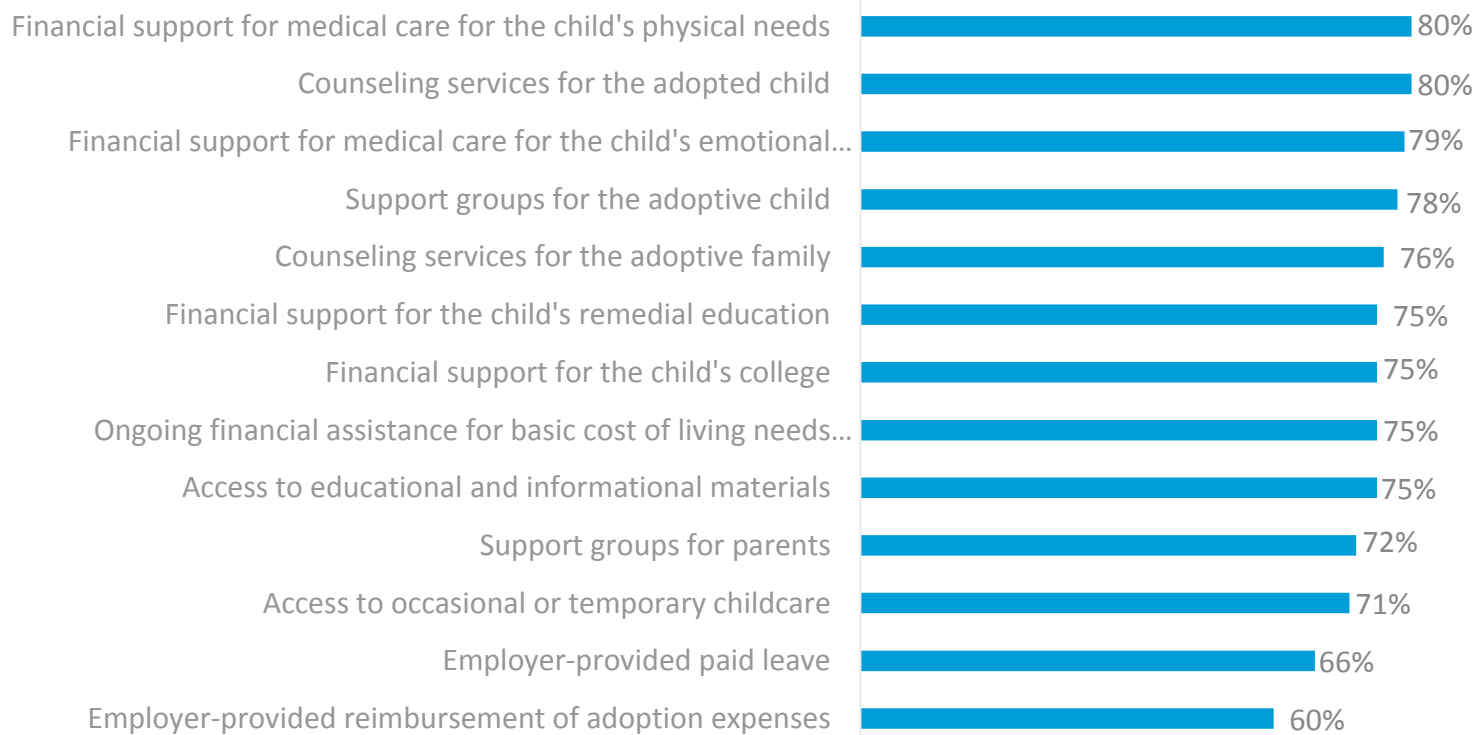
Q921. There are a number of concerns that people might have when considering adoption of foster children. For each statement listed below, please rate the level of your concern. (MAJOR/MINOR CONCERN)

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# IMPACT OF OPPORTUNITY FOR SUPPORT/SERVICES ON DECISION TO PURSUE ADOPTION

Those considering foster care adoption say having financial support and support for the emotional well-being of the child will make the biggest difference on their decision to adopt.

**Potential Impact on Pursuit of Foster Care Adoption**  
(% saying major/minor difference)  
*By Has Considered Foster Care Adoption*



■ Have considered foster care adoption

Base: All Qualified Respondents (Have considered foster care adoption (n=279))

Q931. If you were to consider adopting a child (or another child) from the foster care system, please indicate whether each of the following would make a major difference in your decision to pursue adoption, a minor difference, or no difference at all. (MAJOR/MINOR DIFFERENCE)

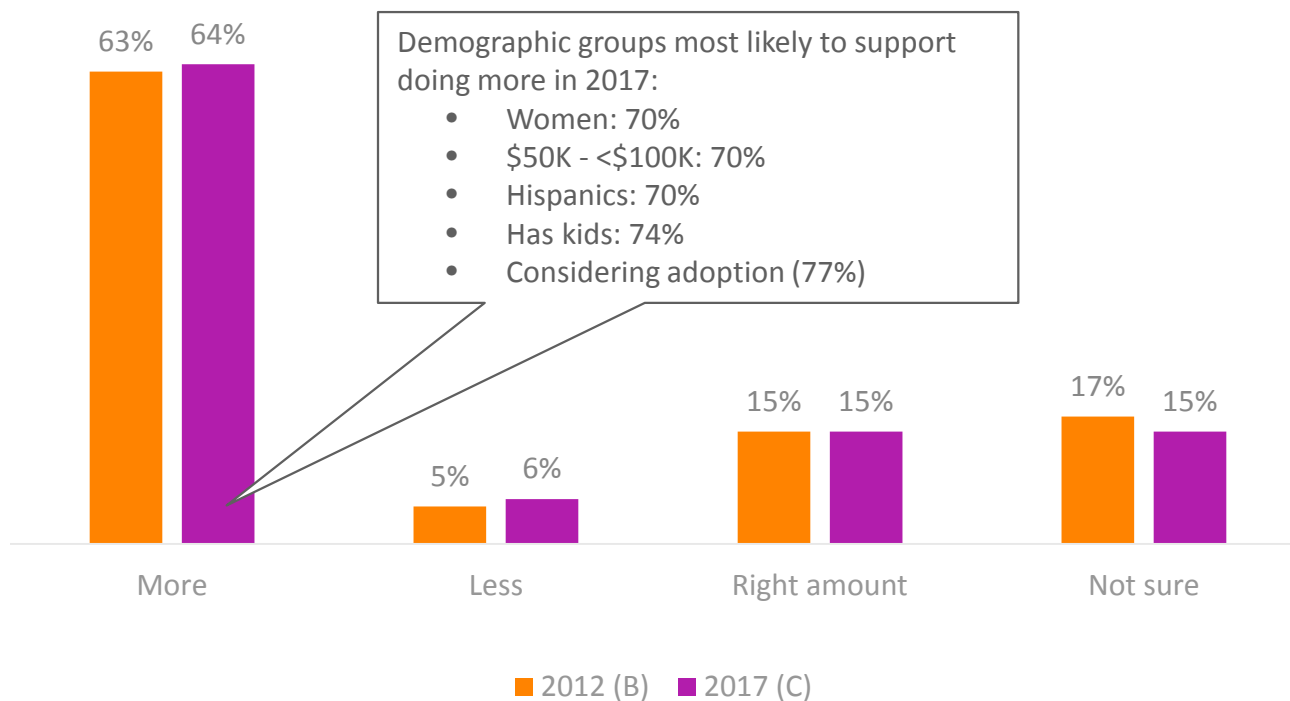


Finding Forever Families for Children in Foster Care

# VIEWS ON DOING MORE TO ENCOURAGE FOSTER CARE ADOPTION

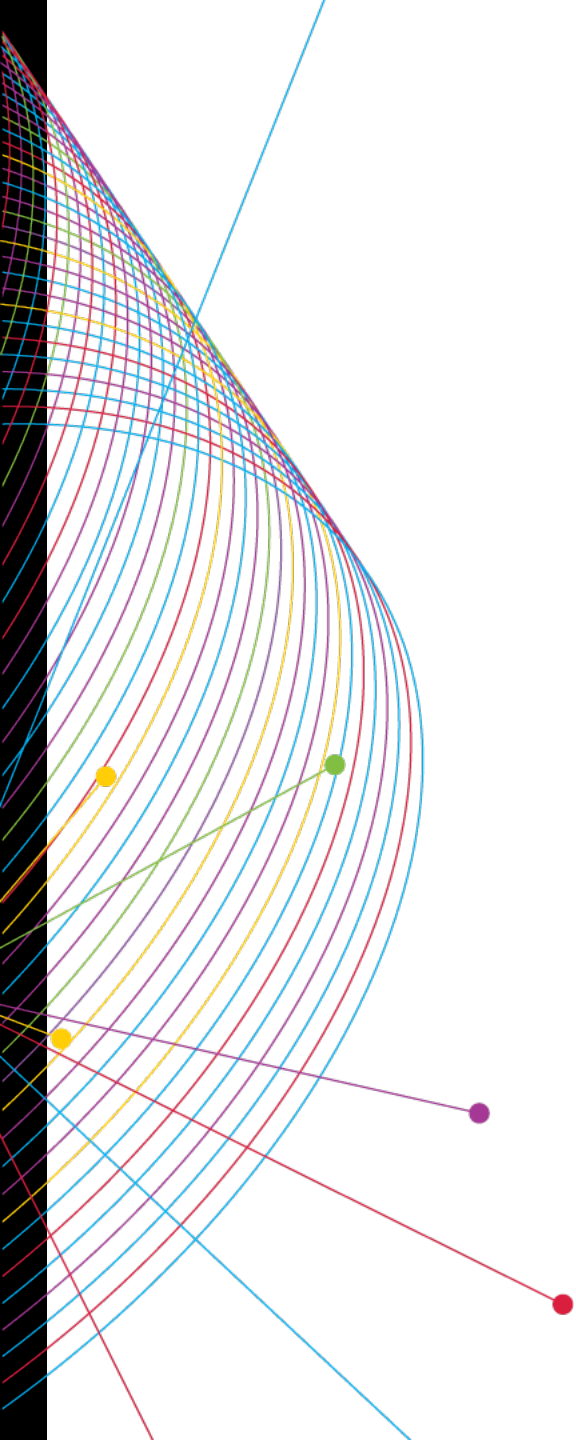
Nearly equivalent with 2012, three out of five Americans feel society should be doing more to encourage foster care adoption.

What Society Should Be Doing



Base: All qualified respondents (2012 n=1428; 2017 n=1448)

Q905. In general, do you think that we as a society should be doing more, less, or are doing about the right amount to encourage foster care adoption?



# DEMOGRAPHICS



# 2017 DEMOGRAPHICS

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## Gender

Male	49%
Female	51%



## Age

18 – 24	9%
25 – 34	21%
35 – 44	14%
45 – 54	13%
55 – 64	21%
65 and over	22%
<b>Mean</b>	<b>47.8</b>



## Region

East	20%
Midwest	22%
South	33%
West	24%



## Marital Status

Never married	23%
Married of civil union	56%
Divorced	10%
Separated	2%
Widow/Widower	4%
Living with partner	6%



## Race

White	68%
Hispanic	16%
Black/African American	12%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3%
Native American or Alaskan Native	*
Some other race	1%
Decline to answer	*



## Employment

<b>EMPLOYED (NET)</b>	<b>54%</b>
Employed full time	38%
Employed part time	9%
Self-employed full time	4%
Self-employed part time	2%
Not employed, but looking for work	6%
Not employed and not looking for work	2%
Not employed, unable to work due to a disability or illness	5%
Retired	22%
Student	3%
Stay-at-home spouse or partner	7%

# 2017 DEMOGRAPHICS



## Household Income

Less than \$15,000	8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	11%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	17%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	13%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	6%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	2%
\$250,000 or more	2%
Decline to answer	6%



## Education

<b>HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS (NET)</b>	<b>27%</b>
Less than high school	1%
Completed some high school	3%
Completed high school	23%
<b>ATTENDED COLLEGE OR COLLEGE DEGREE (NET)</b>	<b>50%</b>
Some college, but no degree	19%
Associate Degree	10%
College (such as B.A., B.S.)	21%
<b>ATTENDED GRAD SCHOOL OR GRADUATE DEGREE (NET)</b>	<b>17%</b>
Some graduate school, but no degree	3%
Graduate degree (such as MBA, MS, M.D., Ph.D.)	14%
Job-specific training program(s) after high school	6%